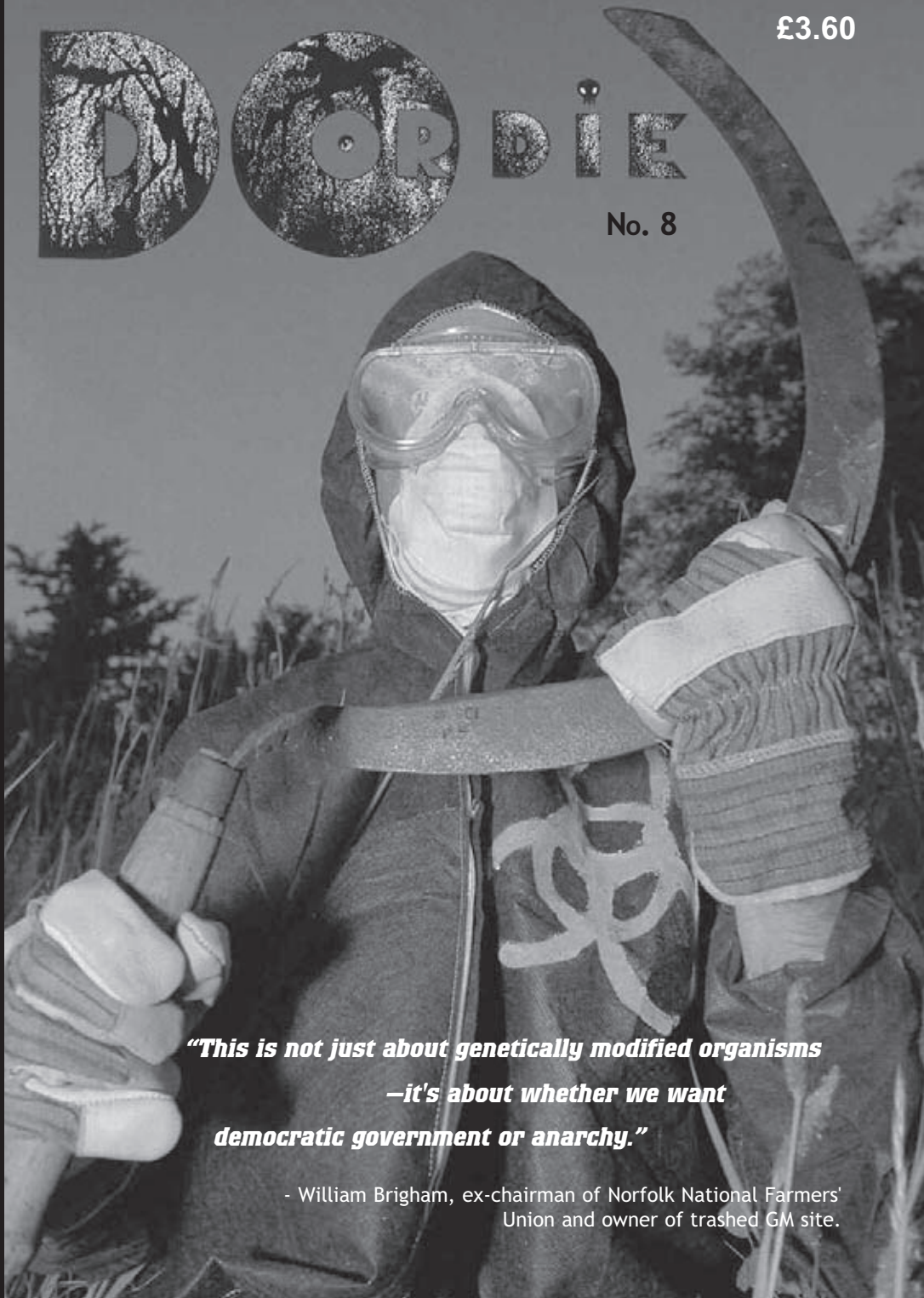
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DO OR DIE

No. 8



"This is not just about genetically modified organisms —it's about whether we want democratic government or anarchy."

- William Brigham, ex-chairman of Norfolk National Farmers' Union and owner of trashed GM site.

Editorial

Do or Die Number 8—The Special PMT (Pre-Millennium Tension) Issue

Well, a few months late, a few hairs less and a few footnotes more, but here it finally is, *Do or Die* Number 8—bigger than the Bible and half as interesting as the phone book. The observant amongst you will have noticed the change in our byline from *Voices from Earth First!* to *Voices from the ecological resistance*. Oh but why, we hear you chorus in unison. Well, although all the Editorial Collective are from, and remain committed to, the Earth First! network in this country, many of our writers, especially those from abroad, are from other parallel movements.



The Do or Die Editorial Collective Plastic Surgery Fund—Please Give Generously

The price for this issue has unavoidably had to be increased rather dramatically. Part of the reason for this is the rising costs of printing, but the bulk of the price hike is because this magazine is twice as long as the last issue. Still, it's a bargain at the price of a pint and a bag of crisps in Central London, or a small semi-detached house in Leeds, and we can reassure you that under no circumstances will we make any profit from it at all!

Last issue we said we were still aiming to publish more frequently. Well—fuck that really. After the last six months of hell on toast we now have *no* commitment to publishing *DoD* more frequently than once a year.

The next issue will, the millenium bug, nervous breakdowns, relationship dramas and tangential collective members allowing, surface some time next year. So, until then comrades...

Anxiously awaiting the apocalypse,
—The Do or Die Editorial Collective (including a token woman now), holed up with six months supply of tinned food and a home-made flamethrower in a bunker somewhere

Do or Die—riding the space hopper of self-delusion through the garbage heap of despair since 1992

Order and Submission

For a number of reasons we have decided to not take on more subscribers. If you would like a copy of *Do or Die* No. 9 send us a cheque or postal order for £4.00 UK/£5.00 Europe/£6.00 elsewhere (made payable to Do or Die) and we will send you a copy when/if it is published. Sending more money allows us to send out free copies to prisoners, groups and random blaggers. For bulk orders and distribution rates contact us at the address below. Back issues of *Do or Die* No. 1-7 are sold out, but are now zooming onto the matrix of virtual hyper-reality at: **http://www.eco-action.org/dod/**

Your letters, articles, reviews, photographs, poems and graphics are all welcome as submissions for the next issue. If you would like to write a long feature piece it would be better to get in touch with us first if at all possible. Although not essential we would prefer all submissions as, where applicable, ASCII text files on disk with an accompanying paper copy. We do not guarantee publication for any work submitted.

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Friday June 18th 1999

Confronting Capital And Smashing The State!



As the economy has become increasingly transnational, so too has the resistance to its devastating social and ecological consequences. The June 18th (J18) International Day of Action in financial and banking districts across the world was probably the largest and most diverse day of action against global capital in recent history. Hundreds of actions took place in over 30 countries on every continent,[1] all "in recognition that the global capitalist system is based on the exploitation of people and the planet for the profit of a few and is at the very root of our social and ecological troubles."[2] But where did this extraordinary show of international solidarity spring from? And how and why are such diverse groups building global networks of struggle to counter the globalisation[3] of misery under capitalism? What follows is a personal account of the history, context and organisation of the events leading up to June 18th. It is a story that needs telling...

Contradictions Of Globalisation

International solidarity and global protest is nothing new. From the European-wide revolutions of 1848, through the upheavals of 1917-18 following the Russian Revolution, to the lightning flashes of resistance nearly everywhere in 1968[4], struggle has always been able to communicate and mutually inspire globally. But what is perhaps unique to our times is the speed and ease with which we can communicate between struggles and the fact that globalisation has meant that many people living in very different cultures across the world now share a common enemy. An enemy that is increasingly becoming less subtle and more excessive ('capitalism with its gloves off') and therefore easier to see, understand and ultimately dismantle.[5]

A Common Enemy

The irony is that before the onslaught of globalisation, 'the system' was sometimes hard to recognise in its diverse manifestations and policies. Abstract critical theory was confronting an abstract multifaceted system. But the reduction of diversity in the corporate landscape and the concentration of power within international institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the financial markets, has clarified things and offered a focal point for protest and opposition. It is a lot easier to oppose concentrated uniform power than diverse and flexible forms.[6] As power heads further and further in this direction, those opposing it seem to become more and more diverse and fluid, and hence much harder to diffuse and



undermine.[7] As the elite, their transnational corporations and their puppets the IMF and WTO impose 'free market' policies on every country on the planet, they are unwittingly creating a situation where diverse movements are recognising each others' struggles as related and are beginning to work together on an unprecedented scale.

The global 'race to the bottom' in which workers, communities and whole countries are forced to compete by lowering wages, working conditions, environmental protections and social spending, all to facilitate maximum profit for corporations, is stimulating resistance all over the world. People everywhere are realising that their resistance is pointless if they are struggling in isolation. For example—say your community manages, after years of tireless campaigning, to shut down your local toxic waste dump, what does the transnational company that owns the dump do? They simply move it to wherever their costs are less and the resistance weaker—probably somewhere in the Third World or Eastern Europe. Under this system, communities have a stark choice; either compete fiercely with each other or cooperate in resisting the destruction of our lives, land and livelihoods by rampaging capital.[8]

Diversity Versus Uniformity

To accelerate profit and create economies of scale, global capital imposes a monoculture upon the world with the result of making everywhere look and feel like everywhere else—the same restaurants, the same hotels, the same supermarkets filled with the same musak. Sumner Redstone, the multibillionaire owner of MTV, summed up this denial of diversity when he said, "Just as teenagers are the same all over the world, children are the same all over the world." On his business trips, he obviously forgets to stop and visit the slums of Delhi or the impoverished rural villages of Africa. In New York, London[9] and Berlin, kids may have succumbed to his spell of sameness, as they sit prisoners of their own homes, their dull eyes glued to the screen. But the majority of the world's children would rather have clean water than Jamiroquai.

Herbert Read in *The Philosophy of Anarchism* wrote that, "Progress is measured by the degree of differentiation within a society." The president of the Nabisco Corporation would obviously disagree, as he is "looking forward to the day when Arabs and Americans, Latins and Scandinavians will be munching Ritz crackers as enthusiastically as they already drink Coke or brush their teeth with Colgate."[10] Progress under the capitalist system is measured by economic growth—which inevitably means monoculture. Just because more money is changing hands doesn't mean that life is getting any better, it is quite the opposite for the majority of the world. But by embracing diversity, social movements are proposing powerful challenges to capital's addiction to uniformity.

Space For Utopias

Capital was only able to become truly global after the fall of the Berlin wall and the break-up of the Eastern Bloc. The fall of 'communism' not only opened up the space for capital to be unrestrained, but also gave a new lease of life to radical movements.[11] For more than 70 years, Soviet-style socialism was seen as the main model of revolutionary society, and of course it was a total social and ecological disaster. But its shadow lingered over most radical movements. Those who wished to discredit any forms of revolutionary thinking simply pointed to the Soviet model to prove the inevitable failures of any utopian project.



Now that the Soviet Union has ceased to exist, it has become a lot easier for those of us working in radical movements to conceive of different societies without having to refer to a failed model. Ideas of utopia can return unhindered. The space has been cleared and the power of radical imagination is back at the centre of revolutionary struggle. Not only has the imagination been freed, it has also become more diverse and fluid than it was



ever able to be under the shadow of the strict monolithic ideology of Soviet socialism. There is no longer any need for universal rules, there is not just one way, one utopia to apply globally, because that is exactly what the 'free marketeers' are trying to do. The radical social movements that are increasingly coming together don't want to seize power, but to dissolve it. They are not vanguards but catalysts in the revolutionary process. They are dreaming up many autonomous alternative forms of social organisation, and they are celebrating variety and rejoicing in autonomy.



The Ecology Of Struggle

In *Post Scarcity Anarchism*, Murray Bookchin wrote that "in almost every period since the Renaissance, the development of revolutionary thought has been heavily influenced by a branch of science."[12] He gives the examples of mathematics and mechanics for the Enlightenment, and evolutionary biology and anthropology for the 19th Century. Ecology has influenced many movements today, and that is perhaps why their model of organisation and co-ordination resembles an ecological model, working like an ecosystem. Highly interconnected, it thrives on diversity, works best when imbedded in its own locality and context and develops most creatively at the edges, the overlap points, the in-between spaces—those spaces where different cultures meet, such as the coming together of the American Earth First! and logging unions or London tube workers and Reclaim the Streets. The societies that they dream of creating will also be like ecosystems—diversified, balanced and harmonious.

The ecological crisis changes the way many of these movements think and act. Kirkpatrick Sale illustrates the scale of the biological meltdown; "More goods and services have been consumed by the generation alive between 1950 and 1990, measured in constant dollars and on a global scale, than by all the generations in all of human history before."[13] The level of ecological destruction is mind blowing, and the present generation feels an incredible urgency about the future.[14] We know that mere reform is useless because it is clear that the whole basis of the present system is profoundly anti-ecological, and that there is no longer any use waiting for the right historical conditions for revolution as time is rapidly running out. Radically creative and subversive change must happen now, because there is no time left for anything else. During the May '68 insurrection in Paris, a message was scrawled on the walls of the Theatre de L'Odeon: "Dare to go where none has gone before you. Dare to think what none has ever thought." Despite capital's rapacious ability to enclose and recuperate everything, the space has now been opened up, and we can finally pay attention to that message.

Transnational Resistance

On New Year's Day 1994, the day the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect, two thousand indigenous people from several groups came out from the mountains and forests of Chiapas, the most Southern state of Mexico. Masked, armed and calling themselves Zapatistas, their battle cry was "Ya Basta"—"Enough is Enough." An extraordinary popular uprising which was to change the landscape of global resistance forever had begun. Five towns were occupied and 12 days of fighting followed. This was not an isolated local act of rebellion; through the Zapatistas' resourceful use of the internet, which could not be censored by the Mexican state, people all over the world soon heard of the uprising.[15] These masked rebels from poverty stricken communities were not only demanding that their own land and lives be given back, neither were they just asking for international support and solidarity. They were talking about neoliberalism, about the "death sentence"



that NAFTA and other 'Free Trade' agreements would impose on indigenous people. They were demanding the dissolution of power and the development of 'civil society', and they were encouraging others all over the world to take on the fight against the enclosure of our lives by capital. Public sympathy in Mexico and abroad was overwhelming, on the day of the ceasefire, celebratory demonstrations took place in numerous countries. In Mexico City, 100,000 marched together shouting "First World HAHAHA!" Phenomenal poetic communiques came out of Chiapas and were rapidly circulated through the internet. There was a new sense of possibility, and the Zapatistas and their supporters were weaving an electronic fabric of struggle to carry the seeds of revolution around the world.[16]

People's Global Action

In 1996 the Zapatistas, with trepidation as they thought nobody might come, put out a call for a gathering—an 'encuentra' (encounter)—of international activists and intellectuals to meet in Chiapas and discuss common tactics, problems and solutions to the common enemy: capitalism.[17] Over 6,000 people attended and spent days talking and sharing their stories of struggle. This was followed a year later by a gathering in Spain, where the idea of a more concrete global campaign, named People's Global Action (PGA), was hatched by a group made up of ten of the largest and most innovative social movements, including the Movimento Sem Terra, the Brazilian Landless Peasants Movement (see *DoD* No. 7, page 88) and the radical Indian Farmers—the Karnataka State Farmers Union (KRRS). Four 'hallmarks' were proposed by this group in an attempt to get people to rally around shared principles. These were:

- A very clear rejection of the institutions that multinationals and speculators have built to take power away from people, like the WTO and other trade liberalisation agreements (like APEC, the EU, NAFTA, etc..)
- A confrontational attitude, since we do not think that lobbying can have a major impact in such biased and undemocratic organisations in which transnational capital is the only real policy maker.
- A call for non-violent [hmmm] civil disobedience and the construction of local alternatives by local people, as answers to the actions of governments and corporations.
- An organisational philosophy based on decentralisation and autonomy.



In February 1998, People's Global Action was born and for the first time ever, the world's grassroots movements were beginning to talk and share experiences without the mediation of established Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The first gathering of the PGA was held in Geneva—home of the much hated WTO. More than 300 delegates from 71 countries came to Geneva to share their anger over corporate rule. From the Uwa peoples of Columbia, Canadian Postal Workers, European Reclaim the Streets activists, anti-nuclear campaigners, French farmers, Maori and Ogoni activists, through to Korean Trade Unionists, the Indigenous Women's Network of North America, and Ukrainian radical ecologists, all were there to form "a global instrument for communication and co-ordination for all those fighting against the destruction of humanity and the planet by the global market, while building local alternatives and people power."[18]

One of the participants spoke of this inspiring event: "It is difficult to describe the warmth and the depth of the encounters we had here. The global enemy is relatively well known, but the global resistance that it meets rarely passes through the filter of the media. And here we met the people who had shut down whole cities in Canada with general strikes, risked their lives to seize lands in Latin America, destroyed the seat of Cargill in India or Novartis' transgenic maize in France. The discussions, the concrete planning for action, the stories of struggle, the personalities, the enthusiastic hospitality of the Genevan squatters, the impassioned accents of the women and men facing the police outside the WTO building—all sealed an alliance between us. Scattered around the world again, we will not forget. We remain together. This is our common struggle."

One of the concrete aims of this gathering was to co-ordinate actions against two events of global importance that were coming up in May of that year, the G8 meeting (an annual event) of the leaders of



the eight most industrialised nations, which was to take place in Birmingham and the second ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation which was being held a day later in Geneva.

For four consecutive days in May 1998, acts of resistance echoed around the planet. In Hyderabad, India, 200,000 peasant farmers called for the death of the WTO; in Brasilia landless peasants and unemployed workers joined forces and 50,000 of them took to the streets; over 30 Reclaim the Streets parties took place in many countries, ranging from Finland to Sidney, San Francisco to Toronto, Lyon to Berlin. In Prague, the biggest single mobilisation since the Velvet Revolution in '89, brought over thousands into the streets for a mobile street party which ended with several McDonalds being redesigned and running battles with the police. Meanwhile in the UK, 5,000 people were paralysing central Birmingham as the G8 leaders fled the city to a local manor to continue their meeting in a more tranquil location. The following day, the streets of Geneva exploded. The G8 plus many more world leaders had congregated there for the WTO ministerial and to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GAAT), the forerunner of the WTO. Over 15,000 people from all over Europe and many from other continents demonstrated. Banks had their windows smashed, the WTO Director General's Mercedes was turned over and three days of the heaviest rioting ever seen in Geneva followed. The dust settled, the world leaders stuck in their glass bunker beside Lake Geneva made a statement saying that they wanted the WTO to become "more transparent!" As if that was going to make the blindest bit of difference.



Geneva 1998: oops that was a director general's posh car.

June 18th—Keep On Building

It was clear that things were really moving and that we had to keep the momentum going, and build on the success of the May actions. The question was how? Then came an idea—why not go for the jugular this time? Why not aim at the heart of the beast, the pulsating core of the global economy, the financial and banking districts, the engine room of all ecological and social devastation? This time we could make it bigger, better and even more diverse. According to an article in *The Daily Mail*[19] entitled "Invitation to a riot", June 18th was organised by "ringleaders" during a "secret council of war", several other papers mentioned "cells" and "shadowy groups"; while others concentrated on the "protest by Stealth", the fact that it was all "plotted on the internet"[20] and was therefore "secret". If you believe the papers, the internet is so secret that The Sunday Times had to "intercept an e-mail"—which hapenned to be on the open discussion list—to show to its readers. Apparently the fact that it was "hatched" on the internet also meant it was "impossible for the police to estimate how many protesters[21] might be involved"[22] or know what the protest was actually about!

The media go to extraordinary lengths to make people believe that this kind of thing can't be organised by fairly normal people, using fairly normal everyday life tools such as conversations, phone calls[23] and public meetings. Only 'shadowy' types using weird and highly unusual things like computers and the internet and meeting in strange, secret places like pubs and community centres could possibly organise such an event. But how did it all start, and in what ways was it really organised? If you work for MI5 or the police, don't get all excited and think I'm about to divulge the names and techniques of all the "organised anarchists"[24] that you so desperately want to catch.[25] I'm going to do no such thing, but what I do want to attempt however, is to demystify the whole process of organising June 18th.

Desiring The Impossible

Those moments where incredible dreams are first shared and aired, where imagination becomes actual by speaking, are wonderful to look back on. Sometimes it takes so little, just a conversation at the right time with the right people, and the seed of an



idea is planted and takes root. Like all good ideas, lots of people were thinking the same thoughts at the same time, and all it took was a bit of talking to make those dreams real.

Last year for the May '98 actions, Reclaim the Streets had spent some time trying to work out how to hold an event in the City of London, this was before it was decided to move the whole thing up to Birmingham. But the 'ring of steel', the blanket CCTV coverage and the fact that the event was going to be during the weekend and the City would be empty of office workers put us right off. However, the desire to do something in this small square mile of land right on our doorsteps, Europe's leading financial centre, and one of capital's oldest and most powerful sites, proved too strong. Having a tendency to believe in the reality of our desires, we couldn't let this one go.

Then during a hot summer's day in June 1998, a conversation occurred between a Reclaim the Streets (RTS) activist and someone from London Greenpeace (LGP—the anarchist collective not linked to Greenpeace International) who had been involved in the Stop the City demonstrations during the '80s. It turned out that they had been thinking similar thoughts about having an 'event' in the City that year to bring all the 'single issue' campaigns together around the common enemy of capital, and a date had already been set for a public meeting. LGP felt that the time was right to take on such an audacious target. The Stop the Citys in the '80s had come out of the momentum of the peace movement. In the last few years, the ecological direct action movement had been getting stronger. There seemed to be an upsurge in workplace action—the Jubilee line wildcat strikes, and the Thameside care workers being two examples. Street Parties had sprouted up across the country with thousands taking direct action and there was a sense that there was enough momentum to take on such an ambitious and cheeky action.

The idea was taken back to RTS's weekly public meeting and to LGP's. In mid-August, the first of many public meetings about June the 18th was held in a community centre in Central London. As well as RTS and LGP, several groups were present, ranging from the Mexico Support Group, London Animal Action, through to McLibel and Class War. A date was decided, June 18th, to coincide with the G8 summit. It was a Friday—therefore a work day in the City. An initial proposal text was agreed and rough ideas of a timetable for the day and different groups to approach for involvement were discussed. It was agreed to hold open co-ordinating meetings every month, and these continued to take place right up to a few weeks before the actual day.

At this point, there was much debate and some pretty dire brainstorming sessions trying to find a title for the day. Suggestions like 'A carnival against commerce', 'Laughing all the way to the Bank', 'For a millennium without multinationals', 'Reclaim the City' and 'Reclaim the World' all were mentioned, yet nobody could agree on a suitable name. Time passed and still no title had been thought of, so we stuck to the date—June 18th—with a subtitle of 'a day of action, protest and carnival in financial centres across the globe'. For some extraordinary reason, perhaps due to the fact that a date provides the ultimate in global ownership, no one is taking on someone else's tag, it seemed to work and eventually, many groups began simply calling it J18.[26]

Good Ideas Spread Like Wildfire

By the end of August 1998, the first leaflet was put together—an A4 cut and pasted photocopied sheet—and it was taken to the Earth First! Summer Gathering for discussion. A small number of people thought it was a suicide mission to try and occupy and transform the city on a work day, when many people would be unable to attend because they were working,[27] but others were excited by it and they agreed to take the idea back to their localities and discuss it. By the beginning of September 1998, an international proposal had been written was taken to the PGA Convenors' Committee meeting in Finland and discussed with social movements from each continent, who gave the go-ahead for it to be networked internationally. Soon after this, an international networking group was established to distribute and translate the proposal into 8 languages. Paper copies found themselves in many backpacks and were taken to far flung places on people's travels.

A J18 e-mail discussion list was set up, where any message sent from anywhere in the world is automatically distributed to everyone who is signed up. This list was entirely public, anyone with an e-mail account could join. During the run up to the action, over 1,000 people passed through the list, and there was a steady membership of about 400 people. Over 300 different people sent an e-mail contributing to the discussion, which showed a suprising level of participation. Someone who had very little experience designing web pages used a web page making programme and set up a basic web site with the proposal on it.



Academics and corporations agree that the internet has become one of the most potent weapons of resistance for activists fighting global capital. A PR manager teaching multinationals how to deal with modern day activist groups was quoted as saying "The greatest threat to the corporate world's reputation comes from the internet, the pressure groups' newest weapon. Their agile use of global tools such as the internet reduces the advantage that corporate budgets once provided." Harry Cleaver, a professor of economics in the USA, has written that "the most serious challenge to the basic institutional structures of modern society flow from the emergence of computer-linked global social movements."[28]

Despite the fact that most people on the planet don't own a phone, let alone a computer linked up to the internet, many social movements in both the North and South now have some sort of internet access. It's a relatively cheap medium that enables small groups with very few resources to communicate on a mass scale. June 18th could not have happened globally without it. The cost of sending letters or making phone calls halfway across the world would have been prohibitive. But it's the way the internet spreads ideas rapidly and in every direction through web sites, discussion lists etc. which is extraordinary. Once a message has gone out, a simple click of a button can send it to thousands of people and each one of these in turn can forward that message within seconds. Ideas spread and multiply at the speed of light.

There is a great anecdote which describes the decentralised multiplying nature of the internet. Someone in the international networking group sent an e-mail to an anarchist group in New York, which was then forwarded by them to Chicago, who in turn forwarded it to Boston and so on to several other cities in the US until eventually it reached Mexico City, where it was forwarded to Zapatista supporters in Chiapas, who were friends of the originator of the e-mail in the UK but who had no idea that she knew anything about J18. They then e-mailed her saying "Wow, have you seen this proposal? Have you heard about this action?" The message had literally gone around the world.

Traditional media was also of key importance, and by the time 20,000 red, green and black leaflets[29] had been printed and mailed out (yes, real stamps and licking envelopes) to around 1,000 groups around the world, many countries and groups had already got involved—including the North Sumatran Peasants Union, the Policy Information Centre for International Solidarity (PICIS) in South Korea, Chicoco (the coalition of tribal people fighting the oil industry in Nigeria), the Canadian Auto Workers Union, Green Action in Israel and a coalition of several groups in the United States and Australia.



Preparation pays off—but how many e-mails before we too get this? (Narita Airport protests in Japan in the '70s)

J18 was spreading like wildfire. Like a virulent virus, it had taken hold of people's imaginations. Uncontrollable and untameable, it had moved from city to city and country to country. Like the financial markets, it fed on rumour and speculation. Unlike the markets, it needed co-operation, community and hope to keep it alive.

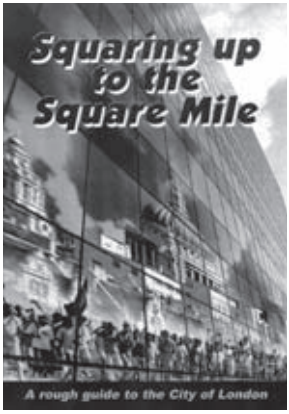
The Importance Of Process

Although what happened on the day went beyond many people's wildest dreams, the process that led up to it was just as important. Although it had some failings, it did achieve much which will strengthen many of the movements who worked on J18. Primarily, I believe there are three key areas in which the process succeeded—group building, education and networking, both on local and international level. I can only speak about the first two in terms of what happened in the UK, but I'm sure similar processes happened in many places where actions were organised.



Acting Together

In terms of group building, what seemed clear was that the process of local groups getting together to plan their autonomous actions on the day was incredibly important. June 18th was providing a common focus for groups up and down the country. New groups were forming and existing groups were coalescing and expanding. Local meetings which brought together diverse interest groups began happening in Sheffield, Cardiff, Newcastle, Brighton, Bristol, Glasgow, Manchester and Southampton to name but a few (eventually there were over 35 different UK groups and places that had their own June 18th point of contact.) Local posters and stickers were produced, stalls and exhibitions appeared in cafes and at festivals. With the freedom to act completely autonomously, yet knowing that there would be many other groups doing actions on the day providing both cover and support, groups found extra confidence and security and felt part of a wider process. All sense of feeling too small and too isolated seemed to evaporate. The success of the day itself will also help inspire them further. Hopefully many of these groups will continue working together for many years to come.



Produced in the months leading up to June 18th were two useful action orientated publications. 'Squaring up to the Square Mile' was a 32 page pamphlet detailing the institutions and workings of the City. The accompanying publication was a A3 map of the City, marking financial institutions and places. *See page 318 for how to get your own copy.*

Learning Together

There has been a tendency in the UK direct action movement to concentrate on action at the expense of more conscious thinking and theoretical clarity.[30] The positive side of this is that it has enabled wildly imaginative actions and strategies to take place. It has also helped avoid the ideological factionalisation and bickering that has beset much of 'traditional' politics. The downside of this however, is that if we want to build "organised popular movements which think things through, which debate, which act, which experiment, which try alternatives, which develop seeds of the future in the present society,"[31] then we have to get a lot better at thinking, talking and educating ourselves and others. June 18th once again acted as a focusing agent, bringing together diverse people from different 'single issue' campaigns, and getting them to think about one question—the question of capital.

Few people seriously understand economics, and even fewer understand the complexities of the arcane currency, futures and options markets that lie at the heart of the world's economy. There are very few places which will tell you about such things in clear and simple language.[32] It is in the interest of the elites to make these things inaccessible and difficult to understand for the average citizen. In many ways, it resembles the hold on power that has gone on for millennia within religious societies. The high priesthood would often hold arcane ceremonies in temples hidden from the populace, and for over a thousand years, mass was held in Latin which excluded the majority of the population from understanding it. Now, in their towering glass temples of Mammon, the elite, the bankers, traders and financiers are still waking up at dawn and engaging in secret rituals. Aloof and isolated from the devastating effects of their magic, they sit safely in front of their screens playing with numbers and abstract mathematical equations, knowing that most people will never make a connection between these arcane games and the misery of their everyday life.

As "a first step towards unlocking the City's mystique"[33] and to help educate ourselves on the issues of contemporary capital and financial markets, Corporate Watch and Reclaim the Streets produced a clear and concise 32 page illustrated booklet entitled *Squaring Up to The Square Mile—A rough Guide to the City of London*. 4000 copies of this excellent publication were distributed to groups preparing for J18, alternative bookshops and conferences, and a version was also put up on the web. Tucked inside the booklet was a full colour map of potential targets in the City—banks, exchanges, corporate HQ's, investment houses etc., all to help people planning their autonomous actions. A wonderful way of showing that theory without action is useless.

Face to face debate is as important as radical literature, and at the end of February 1999, a 'day of self education' was held in a squatted social centre in



Stoke Newington, London, which involved over 100 people participating in theoretical workshops and debates about the issues surrounding J18. As well as this, various people travelled around giving workshops at conferences and gatherings, sometimes illustrating them with slide shows and the J18 video. This 18 minute video featured an amusing spoof Hollywood trailer for J18, complete with deep husky American voice and superfast paced edits, an ironic short film on the resistance to the IMF and World Bank and a couple of spoof adbusters adverts about growth economics and the G8. 100 free copies of this were distributed globally, and it was shown in many places ranging from Israeli and US Cable TV, squatted social centres in Europe, through to benefit gigs in London. Some people even illegally dubbed it onto the beginning of rented video tapes!

Sharing Together

As has been described extensively above, one of the central ideas behind J18 was the need to create international and local networks of resistance. But perhaps describing this amorphous and fluid form of communication as a network is misleading. Harry Cleaver describes a net as a "woven fabric made up of interlinked knots—which in social terms means interlinked groups. This is applicable enough when it comes to easily identifiable, co-operating groups, such as NGOs."[34] But, what is missing from this description, continues Cleaver, "is the sense of ceaseless, fluid motion within 'civil society' in which 'organising' many not take the form of 'organisations' but an ebb and flow of contact at myriad points."

For Cleaver, the perfect metaphor for the type of organising that is presently taking place between grassroots groups is water, "especially of oceans with their ever restless currents and eddies, now moving faster, now slower, now warmer, now colder, now deeper, now on the surface. At some points water does freeze, crystallising into rigidity, but mostly it melts again, undoing one molecular form to return to a process of dynamic self-organising that refuses crystallisation yet whose directions and power can be observed and tracked." The process of J18 was exactly like this, and this fluidity is one of our greatest strengths against the rigid constraints of capital.

The Day Gets Nearer—The State Prepares…

It was no coincidence that on the 29th January, a full page article appeared in *The Daily Mirror*, with the headline "Police spy bid to smash the anti-car protesters." Including 10 surveillance mug shots with WANTED printed above them, the article began "An Anti-Car group is being targeted by police who fear it plans to bring chaos to Britain's roads. Every police station in Britain has been circulated with photographs of Reclaim The Streets demonstrators in a bid to identify ringleaders."

Five months to go 'til J18 and the state had begun their counteroffensive. According to an article, "A Special Branch document obtained by *The Mirror* admits it is almost impossible for police to monitor groups like Reclaim The Streets. It says: "Increasingly, the environmentalists represent an impenetrable problem for conventional intelligence gathering. The need for an enhancement in covert pro-active intelligence by police is clear." Which was great news, and was further evidence of the fact that the state is completely unable to grasp the way fluid 'disorganisations' work. They are so used to hierarchy, orders and centralisation that they just can't see us, let alone catch us. Perhaps this is why Operation Jellystone, as it was called by the police, did not succeed in rounding up 'ringleaders' or preventing J18 happening.

The Angry Brigade knew this in 1970 when they declared "We were invincible because we were everybody. They could not jail us for we did not exist."[35] You would have thought that 25 years later, the state would have cottoned onto us!


Alex
HAVE YOU HEARD- SOME ANARCHIST GROUP IS ORGANISING A "STOP THE CITY" DEMONSTRATION ON JUNE 18TH!!
WHAT? YOU'RE JOKING.
APPARENTLY THEY INTEND TO CAUSE MAXIMUM DISRUPTION TO THE WORKINGS OF THE CITY ON THAT DAY AND ARE TARGETING CUSTARD PIE AMBUSHES ON A SERIES OF HIGH PROFILE FINANCIAL BIG-WIGS...
UNBELIEVABLE
WHERE DO THEY GET THEIR IDEAS FROM? I MEAN, THE SHEER BLIND IGNORANCE OF THESE SOCIAL MISFITS AND TROUBLE-MAKERS BEGGARS BELIEF...
I KNOW!
JUNE 18TH?!! ANYBODY WHO IS ANYBODY WILL BE AT ROYAL ASCOT WON'T THEY? THE CITY WILL BE DESERTED.
EXACTLY! DON'T THOSE IDIOTS HAVE DIARIES?



The Day Gets Even Nearer—We Prepare…

J18 stickers, which were printed with over 30 different designs, were beginning to be seen everywhere—lamp-posts, cash machines, bustops—you could hardly walk down a street in Central London without seeing one. A Virgin Airways advertising campaign proved particularly apt for stickering, as Virgin had recuperated Communist slogans such as 'A revolution is in the Air', 'Up the Workers'—and orange stickers on the deep red background below these slogans looked great! A sticker was even seen stuck to the back of an unsuspecting police officer during the Mayday Reclaim the Streets tube party![36]

Numerous gigs took place to raise awareness and money. 50,000 club-like metallic gold J18 flyers[37] which opened up to reveal a quote from Raoul Vaneigem saying 'To work for delight and authentic festivity is barely distinguishable from preparing for general insurrection"[38] somehow disappeared within a month as did 10,000 fly posters.

Meanwhile, NATO was bombing Serbia back to the stone age in order that Western Capital could enclose this last enclave of the Eastern Bloc. We asked ourselves who was going to rebuild the bridges, oil refineries, roads, schools, hospitals and power stations and who is going to replace the millions of pounds worth of weapons used every day? Could it possibly be Western oil, engineering, construction and arms companies? Many of us felt compelled to do something, to take action. But the timing was dreadful, and as we were are all overworked with June 18th preparations, there was no way we could organise anything else. Would the war still be going on on June 18th? The issues were so clearly identical, but how could we sucessfully integrate it into the action?

With only four weeks to go, the media war began, *The Sunday Telegraph's* Business Section front page headline declaring "City faces mass protest threat" went on to claim: "Banks and finance houses are being urged by the City of London Police and the British Bankers Association to tighten security and alert their staff after uncovering plans by protest groups to bring Britain's financial centre to a standstill."[39] After describing J18 fairly accurately, mostly quoting the web site, the article went on to quote a 'City professional' as saying: "We will not bow to these people. We have money to make here". But it was clear that the City was taking things very seriously. All leave was cancelled for City of London police officers on the day. The Corporation of London sent letters out to the Managing Director of every firm in the square mile (and many outside it) with instructions to circulate the warning of "major disruption" and the need for extra security measures to be taken on June 18th to all staff. Two weeks to go and *the Big Issue's* front cover had a montage of a businessman on fire, with the headline "Breaking the Banks" and a five page feature on J18 inside. The heat was on…

Leaked letters from firms in the City showed that enormous amounts of security precautions were being taken, including barricades erected in entrances to buildings, extra security guards, minimising meetings with people not normally in the particular offices, discouraging visitors to the building and keeping deliveries to an absolute minimum for the day. There were even rumours that several firms told workers not to bother coming into the City on the day and to work from home.

One particularly worried and especially aggressive city worker sent an abusive e-mail to one of the groups, threatening to "smash your pinko faces in." He sent it via a hotmail account, thinking it was an anonymous way of e-mailing someone. Within hours a cyber-geek on the J18 discussion list had managed to trace the origin of the e-mail to merchant bankers Merryl Lynch. The IT manger there was immediately told of his worker's abuse of company computers—we never heard of him again!

The Last Few Days…

Now with only a short time left to go, 8,000 red, green, black and gold masks were printed and painstakingly hand threaded with elastic. Final preparations were happening across the country: autonomous action plans tightened up in Bristol, giant carnival heads with sound systems inside were nearing completion in Sheffield, the London International Futures Exchange (LIFFE) was measured up so that it could have a wall built in front of its entrance, the web masters and mistresses put finishing touches to the special web pages which would stream live video from London and Sidney on the day, wigs and disguises were bought, freshly painted banners hung up to dry, four different sound systems donated separate pieces of equipment so that a communal sound system can be driven in on the day, blockading teams memorised maps and mobile phone numbers, people had to file past a competing team of police surveillance and media cameras to get into a meeting, and a crew of Red Bull junkies sat up



all night editing a 32 page spoof newspaper, called *Evading Standards,* for distribution across London .

A year on from that hot summer's day's conversation, everything was set to go. Hundreds of groups in 43 countries had said they were going to do something on the day, and the City of London Police estimated 10,000 people would turn up for the actions in the Square Mile. But despite all the endless meetings, careful preparations and military precision planning we knew that only one thing will enable the day to succeed—the active spontaneous actions of the participants. Spontaneity is one more vital tool of resistance to join fluidity and diversity. It is the freedom to play. The desire beyond want and external compulsion. It's the play of life itself and the very opposite of work, order and hierarchy.

Revolutionary epochs are periods of convergence when apparently separate processes collect to form a socially explosive crisis—perhaps it was an unwittingly accurate description of our times, when the leader of *The Express* claimed that it was "Critical Mass" which "planned…[June 18th]…across the world." You and I know that 'Critical Mass' does not exist, that it's just an idea—the blocking of rush hour traffic by mass bike rides—and it certainly didn't organise June 18th. But perhaps there is no better way of describing what is happening around the world. A critical mass is building—and every year, every month, and every day it gets bigger and stronger. Reports of strikes, of direct actions and of protest and occupations from across the world flow along the same lines of communication that carry the trillions of pounds involved in the reckless unsustainable money game of transnational capital. Soon there is going to be an explosion—an explosion which will be so different from any other revolutionary upsurge that those in power won't even realise that it is about to transform their world forever. There is much work to be done, but the hope and possibility expressed during the process and events of June 18th have brought us one step closer to this wondrous moment…


TODAY MOTHER EARTH WILL CLAIM BACK WHAT IS HERS! TODAY HER BOWELS WILL OPEN AND FIRE AND BRIMSTONE WILL SPEW FORTH UPON THE CURSED CITY!
TODAY IS DOOMSDAY!

Footnotes

1. See the June 18th website for a complete list of actions: www.j18.org
2. From the first June 18th leaflet, published 1998.
3. Globalisation has become a buzzword and can be a confusing term. I prefer the term Neoliberalism, used in Europe and Latin America, but will use the more common English term. My understanding of globalisation is best summed up in the following section of Reclaim the Streets Agitprop: "Capital has always been global. From the slave trade of earlier centuries to the imperial colonisation of lands and cultures across the world, its boundless drive for expansion—for short term financial gain—has recognised no limits. Backed up by state power, capitalist accumulation has created widespread social and ecological devastation where it ever extended. But now, capitalism is attempting a new strategy to reassert and intensify its dominance over us. Its name is economic globalisation, and it consists of the dismantling of national limitations to trade and to the free movement of capital. It enables companies, driven by the demands of the rapacious gambling of money markets, to ransack the entire globe in search for ever higher profits, lowering wages and environmental standards in their wake. Globalisation is arguably the most fundamental redesign of the planet's political and economic arrangements since the Industrial Revolution." *Global Street Party Agitprop*—May 16th 1998.
4. See: *Year of the Heroic Guerilla—World Revolution and Counterrevolution in 1968*, by Robert V. Daniels, Harvard University Press 1989, for an overview of the global struggles in 1968. Or for a very readable pictorial account: *1968, Marching in the Streets,* by Tariq Ali, Castelle 1998.
5. Ironically, this was one of the central weaknesses of the Soviet-Style state. Uniformity undermines diversity and the capacity to diffuse opposition.
6. The engines of capital, the financial markets, may be 'anarchic', flexible and fluid—but they are still governed by one unbreakable law—profit.
7. A further irony is that the same tools that enable capital to disregard borders and produce commodities thousands of miles away from their markets, the internet and cheap air travel, are the same tools which are helping global social movements to meet and work with each other. Of course I am aware of the ecological and social costs of the computer industry and air travel. The only way I can resolve this contradiction is by applying a homeopathic metaphor to it. The word Homeopathy comes from the Greek and means 'similar suffering'. The idea is that a substance that can produce symptoms in a healthy person can cure those symptoms in a sick person. For instance, if you suffer from hayfever, running nose and eyes, then you take a minute dose of onion, because onion juice produces similar symptoms (something anyone cutting up onions will have experienced.) The concept of this minimum dose states that we must only use as little medicine as possible to stimulate the body's own healing



mechanism. So if we apply this to the use of destructive technologies to enable social change, it is clear that the amount of air travel and internet used by activists is minute, compared with what is used for capitalist gain and perhaps this minute amount of 'poisonous' substance may actually stimulate the healing capacities of the social body.

8. See Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello's excellent book about global struggle: *Global Village or Global Pillage—Economic Reconstruction from the Bottom Up*, Second Edition, South End Press, Cambridge 1998.
9. Despite the fact that a recent government statistics reveal that one in three children in the UK is brought up in poverty.
10. Quoted in: *Trilaterism*, edited by Holly Sklar, 1980, quoted in *The Case Against the Global Economy, and For a Turn Toward the Local*, edited by Mander and Goldsmith, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco 1996.
11. See: *A Handicap Removed* by Dominique Vidal, Le Monde Diplomatique, May 1998.
12. *Post Scarcity Anarchism* by Murray Bookchin, Black Rose Books, Montreal 1971.
13. *Rebels Against the Future—Lessons for the Computer Age* by Kirkpatrick Sale, Quartet Books 1996.
14. The generations of the '50s to the '80s had the threat of nuclear apocalypse hanging over them, but that was a question of probability—IF there was a nuclear war. The question is no longer an if, because there is certainity that as long as business continues as normal, the biosphere will be irrevocably damaged. If it hasn't already been so.
15. Emanating from Subcommandante Marcos' now legendary jungle battered Olivetti laptop.
16. See the excellent writings of US academic Harry Cleaver about computer linked social movements—available on the web at: http:/www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/hmchtml papers.html
17. Subcommandante Marcos said in his speech to the Convention: "We…ask in the name of all men and women that you save a moment, a few days, a few hours, enough minutes to find the common enemy."
18. From PGA manifesto, February 1998—see: www.agp.org for more details on the PGA.
19. *The Daily Mail*, Monday June 21 1999, p. 23 'Invitation to a Riot' by Steve Doughty and Peter Rose.
20. *The Daily Express*, Saturday June 19 1999, p. 3 'Day of Chaos Planned on the Interne' by Danny Penman.
21. So does that mean that when actions were organised using leaflets and posters, they were able to use their psychic powers and guess exactly how many protestors would be in the City of London? The irony is that police figures, weeks before the protest, estimated 10,000 people which was good deal more accurate than the figures quoted on the day by the majority of the media, which ranged from 3000-7000.



22. *The Daily Telegraph*, Saturday June 19 1999, p. 5 Protest Hatched on the Internet by Tom Sykes.
23. Phone calls are not normal tools in most of the world. I am obviously referring to the 'affluent' societies here.
24. *The Financial Times*, Friday June 18 1999, 'Organised Anarchists'
25. After June 18th (and at time of writing in August 1999) the police had 60 officers working on the case full time, looking at 5000 hours of CCTV footage and other evidence.
26. There is a very unfortunate similarity between J18 and the name of the violent ultrafascist group C18 (which stands for combat and then the initials of Adolf Hitler, A and H the first and eighth letters of the alphabet). None of us clocked on to this until too late, but some of the media did mention it!
27. Most large-scale action, especially street parties, have taken place on weekends. Holding something which required thousands to participate, if it was going to work, on a weekday was admittedly quite a risk.
28. *Computer Linked Social Movements and the Global Threat to Capitalism* by Harry Cleaver, http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/hmchtmlpapers.html
29. Three colours representing Anarchism, Communism and Ecology.
30. See George MacKays introduction to *DIY Culture, Party and Protest in '90s Britain*, Verso, London 1998 for an academic but interesting critique.
31. From J18 international leaflet—quoted from Noam Chomsky. No further reference available.
32. If you are going to read any paper which tells you the real stories about what is going on in the world, who pulls the strings and how the system works, then you have to fork out 85p for the *Financial Times*. Or go into a large branch of WH Smiths, where they trust you to pay just by dropping the change (a few coppers can do) into a bucket. It will be the most educating shoplifting you have ever done.
33. From the introduction of *Squaring Up to the Square Mile—A Rough Guide to the City of London*, Corporate Watch and Reclaim the Streets, J18 Publications 1999.
34. *Computer-linked Social Movements and the Global Threat to Capitalism* by Harry Cleaver, see above.
35. The Angry Brigade Communique 6/7, 1970.
36. RTS organised a Tube Party in support of Tube workers and against the privatisation of the London Underground, which took place on May 1st, 1999.
37. Many people assumed that these gold flyers cost the earth to print, in fact they cost the same amount as if we had done them in any other colour.
38. *The Revolution of Everyday Life*, Raoul Vaneigem, Rebel Press 1994.
39. *The Sunday Telegraph*, May 16 1999 'City Faces Mass Protest Threat' by Grant Ringshaw.



Autonomous Actions and Anarchy!

In all the talk and publicity leading up to June 18th a huge emphasis was put on the importance of groups and individuals organising their own autonomous actions to be carried out on the morning in the City of London. In the end there were around 20 of these actions that took place in and around the square mile of the City, as well as a number outside the capital. Groups that took action in the City that morning included Campaign Against the Arms Trade, a selection of Earth First! groups, International Solidarity with Workers in Russia, Haringey Solidarity Group, the Association of Autonomous Astronauts, London Animal Action and Tyneside Action for People and Planet. Here we have included a few pieces of writing on the background to some of these actions. All are personal accounts and do not necessarily represent the views or ideas of the rest of the people involved in that particular group or action. For more comprehensive coverage of other events that happened during the morning on June 18th get the *Earth First! Action Update*, No. 60/July 1999—see page 344 for their contact details.

Unions—Pimps For Capitalism!

Revolutionaries from the Northern Anarchist Network, the Anarchist Communist Federation, plus individual anarchists and communists, invaded the Trade Union Congress (TUC) HQ in London as part of the June 18th day of action.

Around 25-30 people gathered at a nearby re-direction point. The group then walked into the main reception area, up the stairs and into the labyrinth of offices and corporate style meeting rooms. The leaflets that we had produced for the day, entitled 'Why Target the TUC?' outlining the consistent role that the unions have played in helping to isolate workplace resistance, were given out to the people that were in the building. We were greeted by several TUC bureaucrates with the expected "What the hell do you think you're doing in here—get out now!" One or two officials actually started into a panic motivated sprint down the corridors—to call the cavalry maybe? One secretary asked "What's this? Oh, it's that day isn't it?"—sounding a bit like it was April Fool's Day!

Leaflets were placed in all the offices that we could get into. We walked through the restaurant handing them out to the bemused diners. As we moved around the corridors and offices, we seemed to be swallowed up by this maze-like bland complex. The huge building seemed barely in use, bad timing? Was everyone at lunch? Was it always this quiet in here? Several members of the group remained outside giving out leaflets to the passers-by.

As we left the building singing sarcastically, '..you won't get me I'm part of the union, 'til the day I die..' suddenly the fire alarms started to ringout and the remaining leaflets were thrown about the foyer.

As we walked off towards the City of London to join the rest of the people who were gathered for the J18 celebration, a couple of police vans were spotted cruising towards the TUC building. We had left just in time!

The HQ of the Trade Union Congress was chosen for this action to point out the reactionary role that the unions play in helping to keep the cogs and wheels of the capitalist mechanism running so smoothly.

We must always understand that the interests of the union and all its officials are different to ours. This separation applies to all of those who attempt to represent our class and act as a pacifying interface between the boss class and the rest of us.

The planning of an effective action between different parts of the country was slowed down by justifiable hesitancy to use the phone and e-mail etc. for security reasons. Ideally ,we would have informed many more militants about what we had planned. Also, we could have checked out the lay-out of the building and maybe phoned the press etc. from one of the offices.






ALL THOUGHT OUR PROTEST STARTS HERE
BLAME IT ALL ON US BANK
ALL THE MISERY OF THE WAGE LABOUR PROCESS REFLECTED IN OUR SHINY WINDOW
10%
BANK

Diary of a Meeting Junkie!

Don't get me wrong, I am not against meetings in principle at all. In the City of London, nothing is going to happen naturally and spontaneously. My only feeling, one I think shared by others after the day, was that you can try to plan too much. When it comes to the crunch, the unexpected will always happen (as it did) and then you have spent the whole of the spring sat in a darkened room expending energy that could have been better used elsewhere.

After a small amount of publicity, the Brighton June 18th group formed and started to meet fortnightly en masse four months before the event. As I remember, there was always a healthy turn out for the large meetings in the beginning. In these, it was decided that there were certain tasks which needed attention: publicity, fundraising, transport, props, finances, and a group to plan the action. These subgroups sorted out what needed to be done and then cleared it past the larger group.

Some of these groups worked really well in an autonomous fashion. The publicity group produced some excellent posters, flyers and stickers (still on my bedroom wall) and pretty comprehensive coverage of Brighton was organised. The local magazine, *Impact*, said, 'I defy you not to have noticed some item of flyposting, flyer or graffiti about June the 18th.' Nice one!

The fundraising group put on some brilliant stomping benefit gigs, not only raising money but providing a situation for everyone to get to know each other—just as important as a meeting any day.

And then there was the action group. Because we wanted to plan a really good, effective action in the City, we met regularly—at least once a week in the beginning and every day at the end. However, the problem was that almost every member of the action group was also a member of another sub-group. This meant that time in these meetings was often taken up by other groups' business and problems. Plus the action group members were having to become meeting junkies.

The action group had decided that the best way to organise was around an affinity group structure. Being new to the whole thing, I thought this was a great idea. However, now I know people better, I realise that if you want to organise around a structure of affinity groups, they have to exist first—work with what you have, not with what you want. A lot of time and effort went into trying to form people into affinity groups and the main way we tried to achieve this was through organising two training days.

The first training day concentrated on informing people about what June 18th was, and we showed videos. Then we had games to try to get people to know each other. Then, in arbitrary groups, we did a hypothetical exercise about an apocalyptic post-millenium period and how an affinity group would cope with problems in such a situation.

The second training day was much more fun, because by that time we had formulated our secret plans and clever tricks and knew what we wanted. We had legal workshops (very useful) and a de-arresting workshop that generated a mini-riot, 'Quick, grab his nose and give him a hammer blow to the diaphragm!'

After we had all jumped on each other's heads in de-arresting and had a few pub sessions, it felt like there was more of a group atmosphere—something you can't produce through meetings.

Then we held a final briefing on June 16th, where people were told everything except the target. People were told it was a traffic blockade, timed to coincide with the morning rush hour and involving three cars and a chain with a banner across the southbound carriage way.

So on the big day, we all met at 5am and piled off to London. The target was London Bridge. (Can you imagine how hard it was not to hum, 'London Bridge is falling down' in the months leading up?) Everything was going perfectly, and people seemed happy. When we got to our drop-off point, we walked the back way to the bridge, avoiding CCTV on the way; you can never be too careful. At the bottom of the Southwark Cathedral steps it all went a bit pear shaped. This was when so much planning seemed futile.

Fifty people all standing masked up at the bottom of the bridge looked just a little suspect. One of our cars had broken down—curses. After tense minutes of waiting, the spotter gave the signal and we piled



up the steps, only to face the advancing law. Some people did a runner immediately, while others rushed to try to complete their tasks. Two cars were D-locked together and had their tyres slashed, while we nearly managed to chain up the other side of the bridge, in spite of irate motorists, pigs and a bus driver who seemed determined to kill us.

Later on, the broken-down car was turned sideways into traffic and had its tyres slashed by the magic bradawl fairy, effectively causing a traffic jam further back on the feeder road. Wonderful.

Three people ended up in police custody, which was bad, missing the Carnival, which was worse. But all in all—we did what we set out to do. And that was very good. When it comes to empowerment, lots of the people on that action, including myself, were inspired by their first taste of group action planning and involvement and will keep on causing trouble and refusing to move on, shut up, bow down and knuckle under.

More To Life Project

"The role of the revolutionary artist is to make revolution irresistable."

The More To Life Project (MTLP) was one of several small affinity groups which came together as a result of discussions about using surreal theatre on June 18th. We were motivated not only by the issues around J18 itself but also frustration at the lack of politics in art and theatre. Inspired by Situationist theatre from the past, we began putting these bizarre ideas into action.

Our message? That there is more to life than consumerism and the destructive rat-race which capitalism perpetuates. We wanted to shock city workers 'into critical thought' not by asserting that MTLP could give them solutions (join this, boycott that, etc.) but with surprise, playing, poetry and laughter. We aimed to prick the bubble of their be-suited reality and expose the death and misery caused by their actions. Work is their prison, not their liberation.

Preparation meetings focused on doing rather than talking. Improvisation, game-playing and generally acting mad kept creative ideas flowing and built our confidence. A crack team fashioned outlandish mobile phones and other props from polystyrene, bits of wire and anything else they could grab. Another team trawled poetry books, zines, cartoons and leaflets for our propaganda, which was designed to be immediate, funny and cover a broad range of topics. The combination of visual actions and written propaganda was very important—we didn't want to just be an entertaining spectacle.

Excited by a bizarre range of ideas, we planned to do something every day in the week building up to June 18th. We hoped that by pre-empting the day itself and the inevitable media backlash that would follow, we could help get the real message of June 18th across, and complement the office occupations, blockades and disruption which would take place on the day. We time-tabled bars, the tube and the street as venues on different days for our theatre experiments: loud conversations about selling fresh air, breaking into games of tag (complete with briefcases), 'follow my leader', and going beserk with toy mobile phones.

We pushed ourselves hard and it was emotionally exhausting. Every day we dressed up in suits, pretended to be something we weren't, entered an alien, hostile environment and then did things that drew attention to ourselves—while simultaneously trying to block off that little voice in our heads which screamed "Shit! People are looking at me! Aaaargh!" We learnt loads of lessons—about what didn't and did work (especially in enclosed environments like the tube) and how to overcome our fears. We learnt





that the risks and stress were not less than 'usual' political actions, but very different!

The big day itself saw immaculately-dressed members of MTLP striding around the streets of the city in formation, briefcases on heads, umbrellas turning, singing straight-faced ('money makes the world go around' and 'if you're happy and you know it, quit yer job'), spouting poetry into mobile contraptions and stopping in the street suddenly to proclaim joyously that we'd 'made a killing!' We'd drafted in a few friends to hand out leaflets with us, having found it difficult to both keep in role and thrust leaflets into bemused and laughing faces.

We're now making plans for the next MTLP venture and writing up (in more detail than we can here) some of the ideas we would like to share with others. In particular we're interested in pushing the boundaries of 'usual' direct action and finding new and better ways to be challenging, disarming, amusing, confusing, engaging, disruptive, bizarre…

For further information e-mail: more2life@england.com

Northerners Doing It Down South!

Manchester began organising for June 18th at the beginning of the year, when several people from the EF! network instigated a June 18th organising group. The first few meetings were relatively well attended by a diverse bunch of people. Early on, the decision was taken not to do an action in Manchester, but to network, publicise and organise transport for the London event.

However, from this point, the J18 group lost focus and all but collapsed. Meetings became increasingly tortuous, numbers attending steadily dwindled, and in the end it was yet again a tiny handful of people from the EF! network who ended up doing most of the J18 work. The attempt to broaden the J18 group out beyond our usual networks failed in Manchester, and it may be interesting to look briefly at why this happened.



One of the reasons the meetings didn't really work is that the group was operating in a vacuum. We had no idea what sort of event J18 was going to be until only a few weeks before the day. Our only frame of reference was a street party, and we had had it drummed into us that this was *not* going to be a street party. We had no idea what we were networking for. Even the morning actions were hazy, as we had some vague idea we might need to co-ordinate with other groups around the country, and this didn't seem to be happening. The group also suffered from lack of a clear remit. Were we planning for a Manchester action on the morning or were we just a networking group? I recall it being totally unclear to all of us involved at first, as to which would be the most effective thing to do in terms of bringing together different Manchester networks both for this action and for future events here.

The group spent ages arguing about different action possibilities, and also the different politics around the event. And this was the final downfall of our group. The accepted wisdom on diversity is that it is a strength. Yet in a group trying to plan around an unknown action, with an unknown random collection of people, with different politics and experience, diversity is a real bind.

I felt particularly hampered by the fact that very few Manchester 'activists' (meaning those full/nearly full-time activists coming largely but loosely from the EF! network) got involved with these meetings, or in fact J18 generally. The original J18 group consisted of a tiny handful of 'us lot', a few old time anarchos, a few random nutters, a few students, and due to Manchester's rich leftie history—a fair few revolutionary and reformist left groups/individuals. How do you hope to achieve anything, when in response to "what we think the aims of J18 are", someone says that "of course, the main aim is good media coverage!" And when someone else says that we should steer clear of putting the word 'capitalism' on a poster because lots of people who might want to come to a street party think that capitalism is an okay thing? It became clear that the J18 group could not attempt to organise a Manchester action, and that we'd have to leave that to autonomous groups. The J18 group would stick to organising transport to the afternoon event, producing publicity, organising trainings and briefings, and managing the money. We could, of course, have gone out to talk to community groups, student groups, grassroots workers



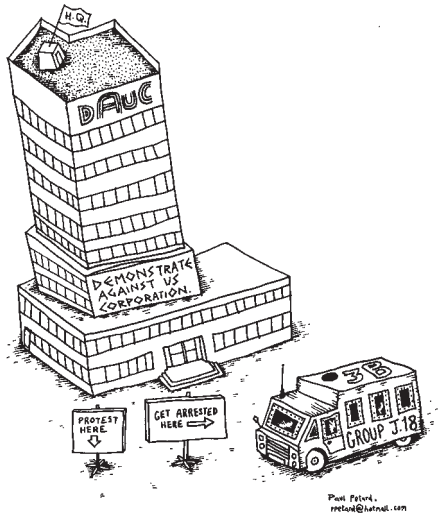
groups, workers in struggle, animal rights groups (who, typically of that scene in Manchester, didn't get involved at all with the exception of some individuals linked with EF!) But the J18 group became about 4 people, all 'activists' with tons of other stuff to do, and still without a clue as to what the rest of the activist population of Manchester thought about J18. This same group were the only ones really pushing to get the Manchester EF! network to do anything for the morning of J18, so it was just not possible to do everything. A group squatted the Hacienda as a networking weekend for J18 among other reasons, but the mini-riot resulting from this just gave us more work in court support and very nearly got most of the EF! group nicked, too.

The briefings and public order training went well, and we produced a good little booklet from this, on tips on how to behave in a public order situation, to be given to everyone on our transport. The coach was more than filled, and if people had got round to phoning to book the coach before 8pm on the 17th, we could have fetched many more people down from Manchester.

At the very last minute, four different groups emerging largely from the EF! network did do autonomous actions in the morning—involving blocking roads, bridges and tube lines. Other people from Manchester took part in a Northern Anarchist Network action at the TUC, a fair few went on a Campaign Against The Arms Trade (CAAT) action, a group of students attempted to organise a morning action, some went on the Critical Mass, and others scattered among other different actions.

Most of these actions worked well, but we nearly screwed up our afternoon role, due to being unaware that we even had a crucial role. Either the secrecy was the problem or the last minute arrangements, because someone from Manchester went to London only the previous weekend in order to work this out, and wasn't told anything really. By the time we managed to find out we had a role (midnight of the 17th) it was way too late to involve anyone other than our small affinity group for a job which required most of Manchester activists. Even at the point of being in the station, only one of us knew anything at all, having been sworn to secrecy. This clearly has the potential for a large fuck-up. I think we need to trust each other a bit more.

And just a final little dig (because of course in general, I felt J18 was inspiring), we must try harder to avoid London centrism. None of the publicity had space for local contacts, and one of the stickers actu-



ally didn't even mention the action was in London, assuming everyone in the country would know which city Liverpool Street station was in. We lacked information from the beginning, and not enough was done soon enough to involve the regions [surely the colonies?] in J18. In Manchester, we shouldn't have bothered with a J18 group in my view—we couldn't effectively network and publicise it in advance because we lacked information from London and enthusiasm from activists here, and all the real organising was done in the last two weeks as per usual.

Finally, the after-effects of J18 are still with us. Many of us here felt the day was inspirational, some of us were disappointed we didn't achieve more, and some were disappointed that J18 wasn't a much broader alliance than the street party crowd. However, a significant number of people, including some activists from Manchester, said they would never go on an action like J18 again, due to the 'violence'. We discussed this in our 'Riotous Assembly' activists' network forum, and had an interesting and amicable discussion.

We may be following the State's agenda to be discussing the violence—as it deflects from the real issue and the real perpetrators of violence in our society—but in Manchester, if we don't want to appear like some hardcore exclusive clique who don't give a toss what some among us think of this, discussion is essential. Moreover, it reminds us that diversity can be not a problem, but a bonus.





Carnival Against



In England, the most ambitious and largest June 18th action was the Carnival Against Capital held in London's financial district. The meeting point was announced for 12 noon at Liverpool Street Station on the edge of the City. By 1pm, masks were being handed out, and then the various groups moved off in different directions...



'The protests forced many offices to add extra security, stationing guards in the street and advising employees to dress casually to avoid becoming a target.' - Financial Times, 19th/20th June 1999.



Capital!

"We met at Liverpool Street Station at 12 noon, and at first I thought 'Fuck there's not enough people,' but then I went outside and was blown away with the size of the crowd there. Most newspapers said around 4,000—I reckon more like 15,000!"



For the 'Carnival Against Capital' in the City of London, 9,000 masks were produced. They came in four different colours, to divide the crowd into four different groups to be led off by people with streamers of matching colours. The masks had this text printed on the reverse:

"Those in authority fear the mask for their power partly resides in identifying, stamping and cataloguing: in knowing who you are. But a Carnival needs masks, thousands of masks; and our masks are not to conceal our identity but to reveal it… The masquerade has always been an essential part of Carnival. Dressing up and disguise, the blurring of identities and boundaries, transformation, transgression; all are brought together in the wearing of masks. Masking up releases our commonality, enables us to act together, to shout as one to those who rule and divide us 'we are all fools, deviants, outcasts, clowns and criminals'. Today we shall give this resistance a face; for by putting on our masks we reveal our unity; and by raising our voices in the street together, we speak our anger at the facelessness of power. On the signal follow your colour.

Let the Carnival begin…"





**'One former employee said:
"I used to work in the City
and they were a bunch of capitalist
wankers."'
- The Independent, 19th June 1999.**

After a good while walking through the City, the four different groups converged on Upper Thames Street, in front of the London International Financial Futures Exchange (LIFFE) building. The soundsystems pulled up, a punk band was playing, a smashed fire hydrant sprayed water four storeys high, and the party started...



"As I arrived at the scene of the party someone was busy sledgehammering into the ventilation system of the LIFFE building. When through, he shouted—so who wants to go in? A drunk punk dressed all in leather clutching a can of brew volunteered and disappeared inside. Did anyone see him come out or is he still in there?"

"I looked around worried about the amount of CCTV on the buildings, but slowly had this realisation that most had bin liners put over them by some fucking brave climbers."

"A few trucks got trapped on Upper Thames Street in the thick of the riot. The crowd ransacked them to find they were builders supply merchants vehicles—full of scaffold poles and two huge vats of paint. It was like a gift from the gods!"







'Anti-Capitalists lay siege to the City of London' - headline in the Financial Times, 19th/20th June 1999.

'John grins behind his Halloween mask and reaches into his dirt-spattered rucksack. He pulls out...a...jacket. The front has a City of London Police insignia, the back and [front are] covered in scorch marks. "I got this off a copper," he said. "My mate set fire to him"'
- The Observer, 20th June 1999.

'...organised in cells, the eco-warriors without a chief have redefined anarchy.'
- The Observer, 20th June 1999.





"I ran into the LIFFE building, smashed a few mirrors in the foyer and them looked round to see this masked up figure light a distress flare and hurl it up the escalators towards the offices. Fuck, I thought, this is *really* full-on."



"One loony I saw had nicked a fireman's helmet and then proceeded to strap it on tightly and use his head as a battering ram to smash a bank's plate glass window!"

"The cops seemed paralysed—just fucked really. They'd lost it—and they knew it. The area was ours, and for a while there was just sod all they could do about it!"

'Most of the perpetrators are not political demonstrators in the conventional sense but anarchists committed to the destruction of property.' - Evening Standard, Monday 28th June 1999.

"I was nicked on one of the actions in the morning so was in a police station as it was kicking off all afternoon. One cop came in drenched from head to toe in white paint. I really had to control myself to stop laughing—it looked like he'd been shat on by a huge bird!"





'Bankers, traders and stockbrokers are the real working class.' - editorial in The Daily Telegraph

'Booze-fuelled hard-core anarchists turn anti-capitalist protest into orgy of violence' - The Daily Star, 19th June 1999.

"The most depressing thing about the whole day was the minority of troublemakers that tried to pull other peoples masks or disguises off. I've had this happen before and tried to discuss the danger that doing this puts people in. It's always pointless, and I've come to the conclusion that if I see anyone do it again I will punch them fucking hard in the face first and discuss it later. Cunts."



'At one point, city money men taunted protesters who had chained themselves to buildings by showering them with champagne and photocopied £50 notes from first floor windows to incite the demonstrators.' - The Daily Star, 19th June 1999





'"We're playing catch-up now," admitted one senior City of London Police officer yesterday. "We do not know who is behind this. But they got what they were looking for. Our resources were overstretched. Tactical decisions were made as we went along. We were taken by surprise."' - The Observer, 20th June 1999.

"We're being besieged by open-toed sandaled hippy vandals. We have armed our doorman, Bernard, with a shotgun." Partner at Maclay, Murray and Spens - The Lawyer magazine.

'Lord Levene, Lord Mayor of the City of London, said: "It was wanton terrorism, anarchy. The riot police came to rescue an impossible situation. That was nothing short of a war zone."' - The Sunday Times, 20th June 1999

"I saw some people crowbar open the back of a cop van and nick all the riot gear out of the back—there were protestors running around with helmets and riot shields!"



Arrests So Far And An Appeal For Witnesses

On June 18th there were around 15 arrests—a remarkably low number. Since the day the police have launched an operation to attempt to track down more of those involved. As of mid August 1999 there have been around 43 further arrests, with one person held on remand. For more details of this and how you can support these people contact Reclaim The Streets in London (see page 341 for their contact details.)

Did you witness an arrest or injury at the J18 events in London?

If so (or if you were one of those arrested or injured) please send details of the incident (time, location and description/names of the people involved) together with your name, address and a contact telephone number to: Legal Defence and Monitoring Group, c/o BM Haven, London, WC1N 3XX, UK. In the event of further arrests remember to give only a name, address and date of birth and then no comment to everything else.

Nobody Talks—Everybody Walks!



The Great Liberty Riot



On a Friday in June, a large protest in London with a peaceful carnivalesque atmosphere turned into a riot. The City was attacked and property destroyed as the dispossessed took their revenge on the hub of global finance contained in the square mile around the Bank of England. The politicians and the media blamed 'mindless drunkenness' and called the rioters 'animals' and 'savages'. This happened in 1780.

The Daily Telegraph of 19th June 1999 reported that on June 18th, "the City was confronted with the worst trouble in the Square Mile since the Gordon Riots of 1780." That summer, a mob of several thousand, led by African-Americans, broke open the prisons of London, attacked the Bank of England and threatened the House of Commons. Buckingham Palace, the police station at Bow Street and the Arsenal at Woolwich were all attacked. The just-completed Newgate prison, the country's principal jail, was stormed and burned (see picture). There were 300 prisoners inside, some awaiting execution. The prisoners were all taken to neighbourhood blacksmiths to have their chains struck off. Triumphant rebels danced and postured, defying the flames—they raided the Keeper's wine cellars and passed around the drink from hand to hand.

In a week of rioting and looting, the rebels systematically destroyed all the prisons in London, one by one. The Old Bailey was in ruins, all the records having been burned and London was lit up at night with the glow from burning prisons and bonfires in the streets. Many of the casualties suffered by the rioters were due to a raid on a huge gin distillery in Holborn at which many rebels literally drank themselves to death [sounds familiar!]. In total over 2000 prisoners were freed, the vast majority of them debtors, condemned to be chained up in a pestilential hole until they could pay off their debt. After the prisons, the rioters' next target was the Bank of England. The assault on the Bank was led by a man on a cart horse brandishing the broken chains and fetters of the liberated from Newgate—even the horse was decorated with chains from Newgate.

The Gordon Riots struck a blow for freedom around the world. In 1780 the British state was involved in fighting a desperate war against the revolutionary American colonists. The riots were an extremely effective act of practical solidarity with the rebels. The following Autumn the last British army surrendered to the Americans. The rioters really did hold the balance of history in their hands.

The poet William Blake, aged 23, was in "the front rank" of the crowd that destroyed Newgate on June 6th 1780. "In America Blake describes the spirit of rebellion as crossing the Atlantic to Great Britain and inspiring, particularly in London and Bristol, open demonstrations against the war, which temporarily deranged the guardians of the status quo and hastened the coming of peace. Amid 'fires of hell' and 'burning winds driven by flames' of revolution,

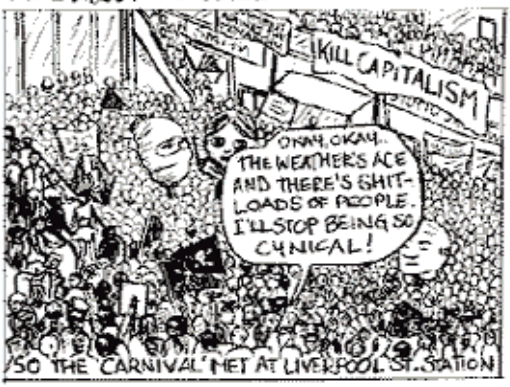
'The millions sent up a howl of anguish and
threw off their hammer'd mail,
And cast their swords & spears to earth, &
stood a naked multitude.'"

Long live King Mob!

"JUNE 18TH" WAS EVERYWHERE - SCRIBBLED ON WALLS, FLYPOSTED, STICKERED, TALKED ABOUT. I ALREADY GOT SICK OF HEARING ABOUT IT IN APRIL.





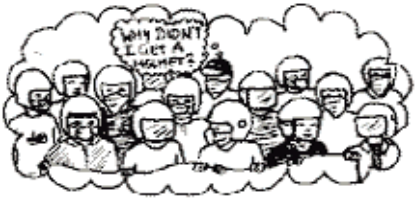

KILL CAPITALISM!
OKAY, OKAY. THE WEATHER'S ACE AND THERE'S SHITLOADS OF PEOPLE. I'LL STOP BEING SO CYNICAL!
SO THE 'CARNIVAL' MET AT LIVERPOOL ST. STATION



THE DIFFERENT COLOURED CARNIVAL MASKS WERE HANDED OUT. AH, THERE WERE 'INSTRUCTIONS' ON THEM - THAT CLEVER THING OF SPLITTING UP INTO COLOUR CO-ORDINATED GROUPS TO MOVE OFF IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS.



(HOW COOL! THAT REMINDED ME OF SOUTH KOREAN RIOTERS WITH THEIR COLOUR CODED CRASH HELMETS.)





AND THEN WE WALKED FOR FUCKIN AGES AND NO ONE KNEW WHERE WE WERE GOING AND WE SEEMED TO RANDOMLY END UP IN A TUBE STATION.



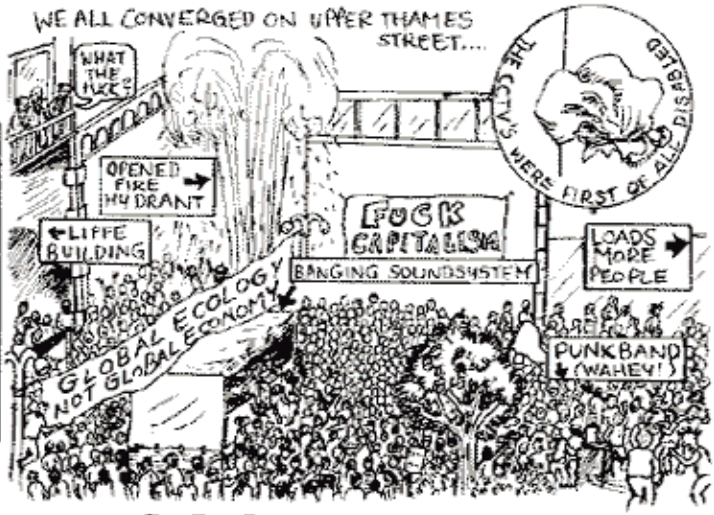
THERE'S THIS RECURRING PHENOMENON ON RTS'/BIG ACTIONS, THAT THE MAJORITY HASN'T GOT A CLUE WHERE THEY'RE HEADING OR EVEN IF THINGS ARE GOING TO PLAN OR NOT. THERE'S SOMEONE SHOUTING "THAT WAY!" WITHOUT EXPLANATION AND YOU DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S BOLLOCKS OR IF THEY'RE AN 'ORGANISER' OR WHAT. IT'S ALL FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, I KNOW, BUT IT'S CONFUSING AND PEOPLE ARE FORCED TO FOLLOW SOME ANONYMOUS LEADERS LIKE SHEEP. I DON'T KNOW, BUT IS THERE A BETTER WAY TO ORGANISE MASS ACTION? AFTER ALL, THE SUCCESS IS MOSTLY DOWN TO SPONTANEOUS CROWD REACTIONS - AND COMPLICATED MASTERPLANS CAN FUCK UP & BE QUITE DISEMPOWERING. BUT I HAVEN'T REALLY GOT ANY BRIGHT IDEAS ABOUT THIS, SO I'LL STOP WHINGEING...

THEN WE JUST LEFT THE STATION AGAIN. WE WERE LUCKY THE COPS WERE BEING FUCKWITS AND DIDN'T GRAB US AS WE CAME OUT.

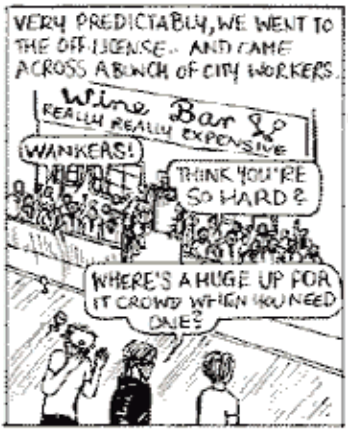


ACTUALLY, ONE OF THE OTHER 'COLOUR GROUPS' TRASHED A McDONALDS ON ROUTE

WE ALL CONVERGED ON UPPER THAMES STREET....



VERY PREDICTABLY, WE WENT TO THE OFF LICENSE - AND CAME ACROSS A BUNCH OF CITY WORKERS.



I SPENT THE WHOLE DAY WITH MY AFFINITY GROUP - A BUNCH OF MATES AND WE'D DECIDED TO STICK TOGETHER... IT WORKED SURPRISINGLY WELL



WE FELT SAFE COS WE HAD TALKED BEFOREHAND HOW WE'D LOOK AFTER & DE-ARREST EACH OTHER, AND IT WAS USEFUL, TOO.

BUT WE MISSED THE STORMING OF THE LIFFE BUILDING - WHAT A RUMMER!

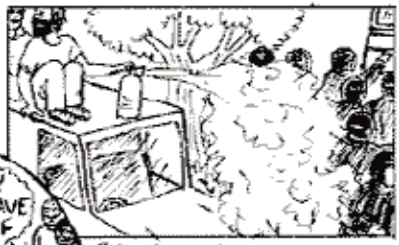




AFTER NOT GETTING THEIR ACT TOGETHER AND NOT EVEN NICKING PEOPLE, THE FRUSTRATED COPS STARTED CHARGING AND RANDOMLY BATTERING THE CROWD IN AN ATTEMPT TO CLEAR THE AREA.



DRUNK PUNKS IN PUBLIC ORDER SITUATIONS ALWAYS PROVIDE MUCH AMUSEMENT!



STICKS AND STONES DON'T SEEM TO BREAK RIOT COPS' BONES - JUST HOLD THEM BACK A BIT, WHICH IS USEFUL, TOO - BUT WHEN SOMEONE SET OFF THAT POWDER FIRE EXTINGUISHER, IT ACTUALLY DISPERSED THEM - SOMETHING I'VE HARDLY EVER HAD THE JOY OF SEEING!

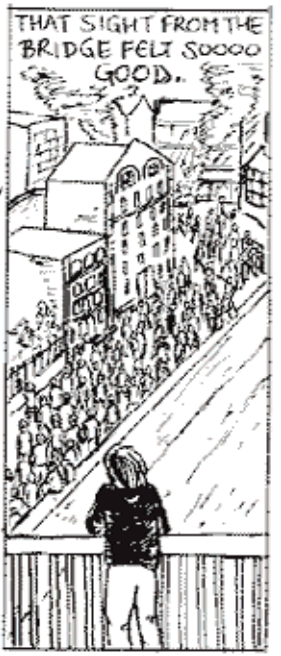

THE ATMOSPHERE IN THE CROWD WASN'T ONE OF INTIMIDATION - IT FELT POWERFUL AND HAPPY (IN MY OPINION)!
bonfires appeared, of papers somehow had chucked out of an office
everyone cheered when a cop was pulled off his horse!
CALM DOWN CALM DOWN
WHAT EXCITEMENT! I STILL ALMOST WET MYSELF THINKING ABOUT IT!
a very convenient building supplies truck was parked in the middle of things.
THEN...
ARE YOU SUCH A COWARD? WHY ARE YOU HIDING YOUR FACE? TAKE IT OFF!!
TWITTER ALERT!
WHEY!
THIS IS A PEACEFUL PROTEST!
THESE TROUBLEMAKERS TURN UP AT EVERY BIG RTS OR DEMO, AND DISRUPT THEM. THEY HAVE REALITY PROBLEMS, AND YOU CAN'T DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH THEM - THEY'RE TOTALLY UNREASONABLE. I'VE LEARNT JUST NOT TO BOTHER. SOMETIMES SOMEONE WILL ASK WHY YOU'RE MASKED UP, YOU EXPLAIN THAT YOU DON'T WANT TO BE IDENTIFIED ON THE MILES OF FOOTAGE THE POLICE INTELLIGENCE WILL CARRY HOME, AND THEY SAY "FAIR ENOUGH". BUT THOSE WHO SHOUT AND EVEN TRY TO UNMASK YOU - I HAVE NO TIME AT ALL FOR THEM. THEY'RE JUST UNOFFICIAL HELPERS OF THE COPS. MY ONLY ANSWER IS "FUCK OFF, THEN" AND PUNCHING THEM IF THEY TRY TO PULL OFF YOUR MASK IS A LEGITIMATE FORM OF SELF-DEFENCE, AS WELL.
I MOVED OFF WITH A LARGE GROUP DOWN ALONG THE RIVER...
THIS IS FUCKIN AMAZING!
I CAN'T EVEN SEE THE CUPS AROUND!
HEZ RICH TW
WAHEY! POSH WINE!
A YUPPIE BAR GOT INVADED, TRASHED, LOOTED AND A BARRICADE WAS ERECTED WITH IT'S FURNITURE.
EVERYTHING WAS SHATTERING, FROM POSH CARS ROUNTED THE SIDE LIGHTS IN A TUNNEL (?)
I SWEAR, EVERY SINGLE ONE WAS TAKEN OUT. FUCK KNOWS WHY!!


OOH DEAR, THERE WERE SO MANY CAUSING THOUSANDS OF POUNDS WORTH OF CRIMINAL DAMAGE WITHOUT MASKS OR EVEN SHIRTS TO COVER THEIR DISTINCTIVE TATTOOS!
AND THERE WERE SO MANY FUCKIN CAMERAS AROUND! WHY? TAKING PICTURES WILL JUST END UP INCRIMINATING OTHER PEOPLE. IT'S A LOT MORE LIKELY THAN YOU THINK, THAT THE POLICE GET THEIR HANDS ON A COPY OF YOUR PICTURES. WHO NEEDS HOLIDAY SNAPSHOTS ANYWAY WHEN IT WAS SUCH A REAL, UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE? LEAVE YOUR CAMERA AT HOME, AND POINT THIS OUT TO PEOPLE YOU SEE TAKING INCRIMINATING PICTURES !!
COULD YOU TURN THIS WAY A BIT?




THEN WE CAME PAST THE FREEMASON'S LODGE, WHERE THEY WERE HAVING A FUCKING DINNER PARTY!
COME ON!
OOH THAT'S A HIGH FENCE
CHEEKY ARROGANT BASTARDS!
SCUM
SCUM





OF COURSE THE MEDIA TRIGGERED THEIR RANDOM RIOT HEADLINES MACHINE-- WHO CARES? PEOPLE WORRY THAT THAT WON'T MAKE US ANY FRIENDS. YES. THE MEDIA HAS AN INFLUENCE ON WHAT PEOPLE THINK (I DOUBT THERE ARE MANY WHO BELIEVE EVERY WORD, THOUGH) BUT FACE IT: WE WON'T EVER BE ABLE TO CONVEY WHAT WE THINK, OR THE WIDE SCOPE OF OUR STRUGGLES THROUGH THEM, WHO PLAY SUCH A VITAL ROLE IN MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO. WE CAN'T START AVOIDING CONFRONTATION, SUPPRESSING OUR DESIRES IN ORDER TO ACCOMODATE THEM, WORRYING ABOUT "WHAT THE PUBLIC WILL THINK". I HAD AN EXCELLENT DAY AND FELT REALLY STRONG. THAT'S WHAT COUNTS FOR MYSELF. AND I THINK IT'S FAR MORE INFLUENTIAL, HOW WE INTERACT WITH OTHERS FACE TO FACE OR IN OUR COMMUNITIES, THAN WHAT THEY SEE ON TELLY.



THE POLICE HAD NOT BEEN PREPARED FOR WHAT HAD HAPPENED. YEP. WE HAD BEEN DAMN LUCKY. THEY'RE QUITE KEEN ON GETTING "THOSE WHO ORGANISED THE RIOTING" AND WILL BE CONDUCTING A HUGE INTELLIGENCE OPERATION AND GOING THROUGH THEIR SURVEILLANCE FOOTAGE. I CAN'T RECALL SEEING ANY EVIDENCE GATHERING TEAMS SO I TAKE IT THEY WERE USING PLAIN CLOTHES PHOTOGRAPHERS (ANOTHER REASON TO CONFRONT THOSE TAKING INCRIMINATING PICTURES). I DO HOPE PEOPLE ARE CAREFUL NOW... YOU GET AMAZING RIOTS LIKE THIS ONLY ONCE EVERY FEW YEARS. JUNE 18TH CAN'T BE REPEATED IN THE SAME WAY IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THE POLICE LEARN FROM FAILURES AND WOULD TRY VERY HARD TO CONTAIN IT. BUT WHAT WE CAN DO IS CARRY THE INSPIRATION INTO FURTHER COLLECTIVE ACTION. WE SHOULD STRENGTHEN THE SOLIDARITY BORN OUT OF THE SHARED EXPERIENCE, E.G. BY SUPPORTING THOSE WHO GET DONE FOR J18. WE COULD ALSO WORK ON STRENGTHENING THE NETWORKS FORMED, CONTINUE WORKING AND ORGANISING IN THE LOCAL GROUPS THAT GOT INVOLVED. AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT EXCITES ME IN THE AFTERMATH OF A GREAT DAY OUT...



The Intercontinental Caravan—A Critical Analysis

"In May/June 1999, several hundred activists from India and all over the developing world will come to Europe to participate in actions against many of the planet's most important centres of power…we all share common foes—economic globalisation, free trade and corporate rule—and that the only way we can defeat those foes is by unified action." - from ICC publicity.

Work for the Intercontinental Caravan (ICC) started seven months in advance. 'Welcoming Committee' groups were set up in every City the Caravan was to visit, linked by an e-mail list, a co-ordination office in Holland, and regular meetings of delegates from all over Europe coming together for two or three days to hammer out the issues. It was an heroic effort which against all the odds paid off, and several hundred people from the global South did come to Europe, networked and participated in actions.

However this success goes only a small way to masking the pitfalls of the project. Early on, serious logistical, political and inter-personal problems emerged. The sheer magnitude of getting 500 or more activists from the global South into Europe was revealed in January when just three participants failed to get visas to visit the UK. It is stunning that the 38 participants who came to the UK got in at all, and over 80 applicants had their visas refused.

The visa process raised serious questions about the ICC's aspirations to be a 'confrontational grassroots action'. Large-scale brown-nosing of politicians and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) was needed to get the applications through. Apart from being utterly odious, this affected the political nature of the project. In the UK, questions were raised as to whether direct action was an option, as the Home Office wished to see the tour's itinerary, and in Belgium, NGOs placed conditions on what the ICC could do, in exchange for desperately needed funding.

Also, the people who were attracted to a project dealing with 'Third World' issues and working through MPs and NGOs tended to favour an NGO-style approach, which resulted in a lot of inter-group tension. At the evaluation meeting in July 1999 someone commented: "So many people were regularly angry and frustrated with other people. The anger is really demotivating… Leftist movements are often criticised for arguing too much, but in the ICC we should have argued more, and really confronted our differences."

Because of its scale and nature, the project consumed immense resources. In every country a few people were massively over-stretched. Most shared the desperate sensation "If I don't do it, who will?" Many groups lacked the basics, such as adequate provisions for the visitors' food and accommodation.

Yet the resources pumped into the Caravan were massive—£125,000 in airfares and well over £50,000 in preparation costs. In one three-day meeting of 50 co-ordinators in Europe (of which there were several), 150 person/days were spent, discussing logistics and interpersonal conflicts. Similar efforts and energies must have gone into preparations in India. Then there is the ecological cost (and dubious politics) of a project demanding trans-continental flights and extensive travel.

Even if it had gone entirely as hoped, you'd have to ask if this was the best way to engage in effective solidarity. However, the ICC project was never quite what it set out to be. There was no mutual dialogue between European, Indian and other groups. There was no meaningful common platform, and this led to a massive shock when people met, with unrealistic expectations on both 'sides'. Many of the Indian participants were even unaware of the contents of "their manifesto" (Which was written by one European man on their behalf!)

One participant commented that organisers in Europe suffered from the "expectation that visitors would be true peasants with the political sophistication of university graduates." The reality was middle-class small farmers, some of whom were here looking for work, business opportunities or just a cheap package tour of Europe (apparently one couple were on their Honeymoon!)

On the other hand visitors complained that they were "treated like cattle". They had no input into the programme, as there was no dialogue between Europe and the South before they arrived. Instead, an over full, badly organised agenda was forced on them. It is a sad fact that on many actions the Caravan made an exotic picture outside whatever institution they had been taken to protest at, but local activists were conspicuous by their absence.

And there are some considerably less funny accounts of what took place on the tour. One Indian man refused to take part in a demonstration in Cologne, as he was so outraged at the behaviour of



the European women—smoking and drinking! The Indian participants were supposed to be briefed on gender relations in Europe, but some apparently forgot or ignored that briefing. Female co-ordinators on the busses reported an overall lack of respect, often degenerating into quite serious verbal and physical sexual harassment.

Participants from Latin America, Nepal and Bangladesh all reported being marginalised and harassed by the majority of Indian delegations on their buses.

We witnessed something of this in the UK where arguments broke out about which Indian States would be speaking at a conference, and whether the Nepalis should be allowed to speak at all. This later escalated into threats (apparently quite real) of physical violence and rape directed at the Nepalis. Non-Indians were chased from their assigned buses on several occasions.

One bus co-ordinator reported: "On the very first day, an Indian guy got up and started talking about how wonderful Hitler was…how the swastika symbolises a maize mill which functions by getting rid of the bad parts of the maize and keeping the good parts…Hitler "defended the German nation state when it was in crisis, by getting rid of the problem elements, and now India has to do the same"!!!!!…How he came into the caravan again raises many questions…I cannot stay in a project that is not strong enough to kick out a nazi…We kept him on the bus over a week through indecision and default…I am sorry we have been providing him with free food and accommodation for 10 days, and am sorry that we had such difficulty in chucking him off, and could not really reach a consensus…"

Depressingly, most of the problems that beset the Caravan while it was in Europe were identified 5 or 6 months beforehand, and were the subject of many lengthy (apparently ineffectual) discussions about "the process". A 'Blind Faith', 'question nothing' attitude permeated those discussions. Critics were referred to as "harbingers of destruction" and "deserters". In the end, some of the most experienced activists in the project (the Dutch cooking collective, Rampenplan, and the transport collective Theatrestraat) pulled out altogether.

Allegations from India that the participants in the ICC were all "seed company reps and bankers", along with the need to apply early for visas led to repeated attempts to find out who was actually coming. These and other questions put to the only contact point in India, a professor and leader of the Karnataka State Farmers Union (the KRRS) remained largely unanswered.

From the beginning the ICC was a centralist organised project offered to people on both continents on a "take it or leave it" basis. This was highlighted by attempts in February to alter the plans for the Caravan. Local groups were concerned that the resources to make such a massive project possible simply weren't there: people were being manipulated and over stretched, and there was a real danger that the Caravan would not happen at all.

Proposals from the Dutch to reduce the scale of the project drew this unflinching response from India: "…A reduction or a postponement would result in the total loss of confidence in not only European activists and also us 'leaders' here in India...When once we take a decision, we execute it at all costs. This particular discipline of ours is what makes us lose confidence in you. And, confidence, if it is damaged once, is difficult to rebuild again…If there is any change in the promised programme, we as "leaders" would not be able to move them even an inch in our future activities and the talk about such a change would go on for years and years...In view of this, there is no other alternative for those who took the earlier decision in Koln, except to stick to it …I cannot write anymore on this, because I am myself losing confidence in all of the European groups' functioning…Try to be responsible revolutionaries!!!!!!!!"

Information is power, and from early on that power was centred around a few individuals. People 'on the ground' simply did not get the information they needed but were expected to come up with the goods. Often this was because the time and resources to get information out to people were simply not there, but it was also because control of central aspects of the project—such as trans-continental communication and visa application—was kept in the hands of a few central organisers.

There was a cultural dimension to the increasingly acrimonious debate about hierarchy and centralisation. In Europe, decentralisation and non-hierarchical organisation are an important part of our political consciousness, but in Asia great leaders are expected and revered. However, the debate about the shortcomings of the ICC should not hide behind this cultural difference. Networking our struggles internationally is exciting and potentially very powerful. However, the ICC showed how hard it is to make that networking meaningful, and that is something that cannot be ignored.



Global Day of Action

On June 18th, events and direct action took place on every continent. Here's a round-up of the actions we've heard about through the Earth First! Action Update, July 1999. No doubt there were many others. Longer reports can be found on the international website: http://www.j18.org

Australia

Adelaide—The Wildcat Collective: "stuck coins around in strategic places", including the stock exchange, and Everyone for a Nuclear-Free Future plus supporters did a banner walk near the main branch of Westpac—an Australian bank who have invested in the Jabiluka uranium mine.

Perth—There was a Jubilee 2000 'Wake Up Crawl' of consulates, a demo against Western Mining's desecration in the Philippines and an action against a local engineering company, Clough, that's helping a company called Pangea plan a major international nuclear waste dump in outback Western Australia.

Melbourne—Highlight of the day in Melbourne was when Kim Beazely, the leader of the opposition, was pied for speaking at a meeting sponsored by Shell about APEC and Global Trade. The majority of people (armed with three roadkilled wombats) met up at the stock exchange at noon, and went off to the local branch of Westpac. Some people entered a department store and ran amok, and there were reports that a Nike store was paintbombed and that ticket validation machines on the tram system were damaged.

Sydney—At least three major events took place, alongside other autonomous actions. The anti-business lunch was followed by a 'scumbag's tour' of the business district. Critical Mass took place later in the evening.

Argentina

A multi-religious assembly against debt and global capitalism was staged in front of the International Monetry Fund (IMF) and Central Bank building in Buenos Aires, followed by a march through the streets of the financial district. J18 was the first in a series of similar events to be held every third Friday.

Bangladesh

Friday is the weekly holiday in Bangladesh, so all the offices of financial institutions in the city of Dhaka were closed on that day. The Domestic Workers Association had decided to organise a demonstration in front of the World Bank's office for Bangladesh. But due to the holiday, it was moved to Purina Paltan in the centre of Dhaka. Several hundreds of domestic workers demonstrated for two hours with slogans against the IMF, World Bank, capitalism, and local and international exploitation.

Belarus

Two groups organised a picket near the McDonald's in the centre of Minsk. They handed out pamphlets and handed toilet paper to people entering McDonalds. Any public meetings or demonstrations are illegal in Belarus, but nobody was arrested. Also, the "No Corporations"-open air festival was staged without permission by the state.

Brazil

In Desterro, the 12 metres high clock placed in the centre of the city, built by the media giant Globo Network was stained with red paint symbolising the blood of indigenous people shed by the European conquerors. The clock, a copy of which is erected in the capital of every Brazilian state, is intended to celebrate the 500 years of 'discovery' (read invasion) of the land. At the bottom of the clock "celebrating what?" was spray-painted.

Canada

Calgary—30 local activists converged on the headquarters of Shell Canada, in solidarity with the peoples of the Niger Delta. Slogans were chalked around the foyer of the building, banners displayed and leaflets distributed. After half an hour the protest moved onto the head office of Chevron Canada, conveniently situated only half a block away.

Ottowa—60-100 people met in Confederation Park and began a march with songs courtesy of the Raging Grannies, a group of seniors who use song and humour to highlight social and economic injustice. As they passed the Bank of Nova Scotia,'auditors' were sent into the building to conduct a moral audit of the institution. The parade then paid visits to the US and Mexican embassies, the National Press building, Monsanto, Anderson consultants, closed off a Shell station and finally confronted the headquarters of arms manufacturer Raytheon.

Toronto—RTS Toronto concluded peacefully, with over 2,000 cyclists, dancers, pedestrians and protesters participating, presided over by a giant goddess.



Police presence was extremely heavy with riot police, horses, bullet-proof vest wearing Emergency Task Force cops and bike fuzz, but despite the burning effigies in the streets (a television/VCR, Mercedes symbol, and a giant asshole—!?!), there were no arrests.

Vancouver—About 100 people "quarantined" the stock exchange and the headquarters of the timber giant Macmillan Bloedell and Global Corporation.

Czech Republic

Numerous actions took place in conjunction with J18, organised by a coalition of local and national groups. The first street party outside Prague took place in Brno on May 22nd with more than 800 people attending. The second Prague street party on June 5th attracted a crowd of more than 7,000 into the city centre. It was timed to coincide with the planned arrival of the Intercontinental Caravan, which was refused entry to the country. After plenty of entertainment, a spirited march headed towards the historic centre of the city. The conveniently placed US embassy was attacked with bottles and stones despite the presence of 1,000 police with water cannons, horses and helicopters. A police station, several fast food stores and one TV station were attacked. 114 arrests were made. On June 18, a much smaller crowd of 350 gathered in central Prague to stir more trouble at bank branches and corporate headquarters. However, being outnumbered by the police 3:1 and confronted with bad weather, everybody called it a day fairly early. Nevertheless, the massive police presence managed to harness the traffic in the city all day. There were also actions around the whole of Czech, and activists in different cities ran infoshops to inform about J18 and actions around the world.

France

A group of 50 took a ramble around 20 local bank branches in Bordeaux. At each, they carried out a symbolic occupation, demanding that the branch managers send faxes denouncing neo-liberal economic policies to the French Finance Minister and other financial institutions.

Germany

Events in Cologne, where the G8 ministers were meeting, proved somewhat less spectacular than expected. The 'laugh parade' planned for the day was effectively stopped by thousands of police. Indians and others from the Intercontinental Caravan for solidarity and resistance, arriving at Cologne after a month of action all around Europe were stopped by the police before entering the subway to the city cen-

www.j18.org

In the days and weeks following June 18th the corporate media in the UK focused heavily on the use of the internet and e-mail in co-ordinating the global day of action. Although most of what they wrote was (unsurprisingly) fiction, the J18 web site—with a rumoured quarter of a million hits by the time the event took place—clearly played a role in the dissemination of information.

The web site is still being continually updated. For people who took part in the event, and those inspired by what they have heard, the web site provides a huge amount of information. The web site provides points of contact for many of the 100 groups who took part in the day, as well as reports from actions in 27 different countries, images from the Carnival against Capital, an hour-by-hour report of the events in London and a truly inspiring personal account of the riots which swept across the City. The original proposals and newsletters for the day of action can also be found. Alongside this are sample press releases and the opportunity to view the J18 'trailer' that was produced in the UK.

Aside from J18 specific information, there are links providing information and primary points of contact for anarchist distribution services, a global calendar of protests, a propaganda image collection and activist groups working on text, video and audio media projects. A section of the web site is also dedicated to providing useful services to radical groups around the world. This includes links to organisations providing free internet access, e-mail, web space, mailing lists and fax services.

Whilst there are a number of criticisms which can be levied at the use of the web, in terms of exclusivity, the trend towards professionalism and our increased dependency upon technology, the information provided within these pages is almost guaranteed to provide any visitor with inspirational stories and images, alongside an enormous range of global contacts and a package of resources which hold the potential to increase both the impact and effectiveness of our actions.

To send contributions to the web (reports of actions on J18, corrections of contact details or additions to the resources list) e-mail: j18web@hotmail.com

If the J18 web site fails, or is shut down, mirror sites can be found at: http://i.am/transnational and http://messages.to/the_people



tre, where many were beaten up and 30 arrested. 500 European participants on the way to the parade were similarly surrounded.

The following day's big march (not the separate Jubilee 2000 event) through the city attracted about 10,000 people including a large Kurdish contingent. Other successful actions included the invasion of a police vehicle compound where several vehicles were damaged, damage to the doors of banks and investment houses, and a demonstration by Iranian women outside the cathedral while the world leaders were having a service said in their honour.

Greece

2-300 people blocked the traffic in the most central part of Athens with banners and a soundsystem. People burned pallets and cardboard boxes and set up barricades. The riot police came in trying to push everyone off the street, which people resisted with big heavy metal bars and by throwing rocks and bricks. A euro-election kiosk was smashed up, and when police saw that the crowd was not going to disperse peacefully, they used teargas. People scattered and there was some fighting with police in the surrounding area. The only arrestee was soon released.

Italy

Bologna—The most important action organised by Anarcocicliști in Italy for J18 was a walk-about through the city of Bologna. A multitude of autonomous zones were created in the centre of the town for the night, blocking the traffic and involving passers by in their performances.
Similar actions happened in **Milano, Roma, Siena, Firenze and Ancona,** but unfortunately we have no further details.

Israel

The 'Goodbye to the Mall'-Street party was held on the streets of Tel-Aviv's financial district.

Malta

The Moviment Graffitti staged a rock concert under the banner "Malta not for sale."

Mexico

People went to the World Bank where they met all different kinds of police. A play was performed and banners reading 'World Bank=Criminal Mafia' and 'For real change, rise up and resist: The struggle continues!' were unfurled. People then visited the stock exchange, where they again found lots of cops. Thousands of leaflets were distributed in- and outside banks before a march and more street theatre.

Nepal

Unfortunately there was no physical action or protest regarding J18 in Nepal. However, we composed a memorandum and gave it to the Nepal representatives of the Asian Development Bank, IMF, and the World Bank.

Netherlands

Around 50 activists gathered in front of the Amsterdam stock exchange. A 6 by 8 metre banner was hung between two lampposts to transform the pseudo-classical front of the building, leaving a gate for the moneymakers. At one stage the protestors moved towards the front door of the stock exchange (which miraculously closed very rapidly!) and officially closed the building with a colourful ribbon and cheap cider. Once closed, 10 Statements For The Reform Of The Financial-Economic System were presented and virtually hammered onto the front door, in the style of Luther in 1516.

Nigeria

Thousands of people from all walks of life gathered at the Port Harcourt International Airport to wait for the return to Nigeria of Dr. Owens Wiwa, younger brother Ken Saro-Wiwa. Owens was forced into exile in North America four years ago.

The crowd then moved in a convoy to Agip Junction in Port Harcourt where a street named after ex-dictator Abacha was unofficially re-named after Ken Saro-Wiwa, with the old signpost pulled out. The crowd also stormed Agip offices where two mock coffins where deposited in its front in protest against the human rights atrocities of the Italian company. Agip has been responsible for the murder of eight people in the Ijaw region in April. The demonstrators also blockaded the gates leading to the offices of Shell in Port Harcourt for about two hours. Solidarity messages were presented by representatives of virtually all the ethnic nationalities in Niger Delta paving the way for further joint action. The dancing and singing in the streets brought Nigeria's petroleum capital to a standstill.

Pakistan

A June 18th March against nukes and Pakistan's nuclear tests in Gujerat ended with several organisers arrested, tortured and remanded in prison possibly facing the death penalty.

The procession broke through the police cordon to tour parts of the city. Union leaders who had gone into hiding four days before were present, masked up, despite the authorities being ready for them on



every street corner. After the march, a protest was held outside the district court, and while speeches were being made, several hundred police charged in with tear gas to arrest about 60 people. 50 of these were later released but the remaining seven, all officials in various unions were charged with the Pakistani equivalent of high treason.

Latest reports are that all but one have been released. For more information, contact APFUTU, Union House, Rang Pura, Sargodha Road, Gujerat, 50700 Pakistan, Email: union@grt.space.net.pk

Portugal

A small street protest was held in Lisbon to inform the public about the link between globalisation and capitalism with environmental destruction and social inequality. Separately another group did a few actions during the day, including simulating the demolition of a bank, by pushing a guy with a helmet against its doors.

Senegal

Exploitation of children was the theme for Senegal's demonstration on June 18th. Debt and structural adjustment policies have meant that the government have cut back on education, forcing hundreds of thousands of 13, 14, and 15 year olds out of school into having to support themselves. Six hundred people assembled on the 18th and the 19th, to hear speeches and see sketches performed by youth of the district.



Slovakia

The first solidarity action with PGA and actions around the world in Slovakia was held on 12 June, although we don't have any more details.

South Korea

On June 18, around 200 people gathered for a rally in the center of Seoul. After an enactment of an imaginary conversation between financial speculator George Soros and Zapatista-Commandante Marcos, solidarity speeches were heard including a representative of farmers' groups, a trade union leader who was currently on hunger strike over government suppression of unionism, and one of Korea's famous film actors speaking about the threat to the Korean film industry from US investment liberalisation.

Spain

Barcelona—The day of action started at 8am when 25 people closed off two of the city's main streets, transforming one of them to look like a beach. Elsewhere, 100 people took a piece of land where a squat had been demolished after eviction. By the end of the day, they had created a proper garden there. The neighbours were impressed.

Bike demos started off during the late afternoon—one group of 13 cyclists coming to join the main demonstration from 20km outside Barcelona managed to close the entire motorway. At 7pm, all the groups converged for a Reclaim the Streets Party. The soundsystem van broke down and had to be pushed around the city by the 700 partygoers, who also covered the walls with anti-capitalist graffiti.

Madrid—A street party ended 7 days of action for social rights. People partied under clothes lines strung across the street, in defiance of an archaic law banning the practice. Earlier in the week, the Spanish stock exchange was invaded by 100 individuals who occupied the traders' posts, disrupting trading for over an hour. An employment agency was also occupied during the week.

Ovideo, Aviles, Gijon (Asturias)—In all three cities, info stalls publicised the consequences of globalisation. Afterwards, banks, property developers' offices and McDonalds branches were picketed. People gathered in the evening outside the Asturias parliament for music and the painting of a mural.

Valencia—To the rhythm of drums, a carnival of 400 people wound its way through the streets, stopping at Lladro's—one of Valencia's most hated land speculators, and on into the financial centre.

Switzerland

Geneva—At midday some 50 people washed down some of the main banks in the centre of the city with



ladders, brooms, water and soap. Then in the evening, some 100 people made a mobile Carnival in the city, blocking the streets, painting them, dancing, serving blackcurrant syrup to the cardrivers who got caught up in the traffic. This has inspired people to plan similar monthly actions.

Zurich—About 300 people occupied a construction site in a part of Zurich which is being redeveloped similar to London's docklands. It was the best party for years. Two bands played, alongside a soundsystem and a screening of the Reclaim the Streets film. The police weren't too impressed of course, but they eventually left, and the party continued all night."

Uruguay

The central square of Montevideo city was turned into a 'trade fair' for the day, with entertainment and stalls informing about work, education, local culture, consumerism, media manipulation, free radio and other issues. The day ended with a 'recycled parade' through the city, during which the Banco de Montevideo and the stock exchange were also occupied. Environmental and trade union campaigners worked together on this event, including workers of the "El Cine" supermarket who have been occupying the supermarket for the last two months.

USA

Asheville, North Carolina—Around 100 protesters gathered for a street party, blockading the road using a broken down car. "Although small, we were in solidarity with thousands across the world!"

Austin, Texas—A Critical Mass bike ride of about 50 people turned into a street blockade, as a barricade and chairs from a nearby cafe were moved into the street for a party. The cops were met with abuse when they turned up, who in turn snatch-squaded three people.

Boston—More than 100 activists joined in a street theatre performance in front of Bank Boston in the centre of the city's financial district. The bank is closely connected to International Paper, a company exploitating the Chiapas region of Mexico and displacing its people. At the end of the day, the crowd promised to return, far stronger than before, to end the rule of capital over our lives.

Eugene—June 18th activities kicked off, with 20 arrested and eight police injured during a five hour Reclaim the Streets that saw bank windows smashed and demonstrators tear gassed, on what had been expected to be just a street party. It wasn't clear what sparked it. Corporate news accounts indicate that the initial spark may have come when police moved in after a protester climbed a US Bank sign and put his fist through it. By the end of the day several downtown banks, a leather retailer and a "Taco Bell" restaurant had lost windows. Unfortunately, there were also reports that some people were behaving aggressively to drivers who got caught up in traffic jams. One person is currently in prison for the riot and facing five years.

Los Angeles— Its first Reclaim the Street party took place on June 18th. A truck full of an 'instant skatepark,' with rails, launch ramps, and funboxes waited nearby but didn't manage to get past the police into the party but the soundsystem van did as did a trashed car which had been donated for people to graffiti. The party became mobile after a while to prevent the soundsystem being confiscated. There were a total of 17 arrests. The police compounded the traffic chaos by keeping several blocks shut for hours after the RTS crew had all gone home, and even sent the bomb squad in to deal with the trashed car!

New York—A street carnival was organised to protest against the annual meeting of the Group of Eight (G8) economic superpowers. For nearly 2 hours, 500 costume clad protesters took over the streets, tying up traffic in New York City's Financial District and rallying in front of the New York stock exchange on Wall Street. Five people were arrested as they attempted to chain themselves together around a large sculpture of a globe and another 32 for blocking traffic while taking over the streets.

Olympia—A Street party was held a few days before the big day, on June 12th. Police grabbed the signs, cones and barricades used to block the streets, and then tried to grab a couch.

Washington, DC.—600 demonstrators formed a human chain around the US Treasury Department, co-ordinated by Jubilee 2000.

Worldwide

In solidarity with Mexico's Zapatista communities, the Electronic Disturbance Theater launched an international blockade of the Mexican embassy in London. 18,000 people from 49 countries joined the call to point their internet browsers at the embassy using a program which sends multiple reload commands to the website, clogging it up for the day.

Zimbabwe

The day was not marked by big demonstrations, but five people were on the streets of Harare spreading information to raise awareness about globalisation issues.

Globalisation

Origins-History-Analysis-Resistance



Thousands of people take to the streets of the City of London in a 'Carnival Against Capital'; 50,000 landless peasants swamp the streets of Brasilia; in Nigeria a 10,000-strong 'Carnival of the Oppressed' shuts down Port Harcourt in protest against the oil companies' exploitation of the Niger delta; 200,000 people take to the streets of Hyderabad in India, and over thirty street parties, involving thousands of people, take place simultaneously across the globe. What links this unprecedented new alliance of activists from East and West, from North and South? They say they are united in opposition to something called 'globalisation'. Every day we hear more about shadowy bodies with acronyms for titles. The WTO, the IMF, the MAI—we are told their decisions are irrevocable, that the markets rule. This accelerating process of enclosure and dispossession is an audacious attempt to assimilate everyone within the global economy and under the direct rule of capital.

I. What is Globalisation?

Globalisation has become a *bête noire* for all sorts of people—activists and academics, reformists and revolutionaries. At a time when nationalism is resurgent, we see an internationalisation of struggle. And yet… confusion reigns—confusion over our objectives, our ideals, our methods and goals. A confusion that could be fatal—if we miss our chance when it is presented to us we might not get another one. We are living in critical times. Therefore in the following pages we examine the background to globalisation, the struggle against it and some of the confusions and misunderstandings that surround it.

The current trend for opposing globalisation appears to have fallen for an inverted version of the same illusion that those in favour of it suffer from—that what is occurring (and has been for approximately the last 20 years) is something new and radically different to what has gone before. The things that are identified as constituting globalisation—free trade, the free movement of capital, the growth of international regulatory bodies and institutions, the expansion of multinationals and the creation of one global 'culture'— are new in the sense that they are new forms of organisation and structure but in essence they are a continuation of what has gone before.

Capital has always been global. The capitalist system is the most adaptable and voracious in history. From its beginning it has been driven by the need to constantly expand or die; the changes that have occurred in recent years are an expression of this need. Globalisation is 'worse' in the sense that it rep-



resents an attempt at extending and intensifying capital's grip on humanity, but it is not worse, as some seem to imply, in opposition to a mythical idealised past when capitalism was nice and local and the state intervened to protect us against the markets. The logic is the same now as it always been—to exploit people and nature to the maximum extent possible. The fact that in some previous eras this exploitation may have taken place in a way that was softer or more 'democratic' doesn't change its essential nature.

In order to understand the process that has become known as globalisation, it is essential to understand the trajectory taken by post-war capitalism. Looked at in this context, globalisation can be seen not as a separate phenomenon but rather as the effect of the crisis caused by the resurgence of European and American class struggle in the late 1960s and the 1970s.

II. 1945—1968: Restructuring, Integration and Growth

In 1945, with the virtual sole exception of America, the industrialised and 'developed' world was in a state of massive economic and physical disarray—a condition mirrored in its working class. In this period the world began to be divided between the American and Soviet versions of capitalism.[1] Stalin's Red Army proceeded to subjugate Eastern Europe to a variant of capitalism involving most of its worst aspects and bringing few of the fringe benefits that help to make life a bit more bearable in 'advanced' capitalist society.

Meanwhile, America adopted Western Europe as its sphere of influence. This developed into the 'cold war', an era of frosty relations and supposed ideological struggle between the two superpowers.[2] Each vied to collect as many 'satellite' nations and regions as possible to serve as new markets for the domestic economy and through which proxy wars could be fought. This was a *de facto* new form of colonisation which was preferable for powerful nations because it largely avoided the hassle of actually administering territory. Those countries whose populations proved resistant or had unsympathetic regimes were forcibly brought into the fold through engineered and assisted coups or were simply invaded (e.g. Brasil, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, South Vietnam, Chile, Afghanistan etc. etc.) The decline of the old colonial powers opened up vast swathes of the world to domination by new masters (both domestic and foreign) who were at least as brutal as the departing imperialists and just as keen to use their populations as cheap labour for capital.

Cold War Economics

In the West, aside from actual physical rebuilding, the task of restructuring faced by states and capitalist enterprises was twofold. Firstly, economic growth rested upon the "diplomatic reconstruction of international trade and payments systems which would facilitate international exchange and secure the regular import of essential commodities and raw materials."[3] This first objective was carried out largely at the behest of the US with Britain acting as its 'junior partner'—an arrangement that has continued ever since. And secondly, it would be necessary to contain the class struggle in order to avoid a repeat of the massive social conflict that occurred in the aftermath of the First World War.

Having divided up Europe and the rest of the world between itself and the USSR, "…the US sought to organise Western capitalism around new international economic and political structures which would ensure the rapid accumulation of American capital."[4] American capital was however dependent upon the re-establishment of *global* circuits of accumulation and the restoration of a degree of equilibrium in terms of production and trade, i.e. rebuilding those economies that had been shattered by the war, most importantly West Germany and Japan. In Europe this was accomplished through financial assistance such as the Marshall Plan, the purpose of which "was the raising of living standards 'to resist the lure of communism.'"[5]

The initial result of this need to restore industrial economies destroyed by the war was the Bretton Woods agreement. This was a system of currency exchange rates fixed within pre-determined margins that were defined in relation to the value of the dollar, which was itself valued in parity to gold (in theory, dollars were exchangeable for gold). The dollar performed the function of both international and national currency, and for the system to work its value had to be maintained. Hence the system was dependent upon the US maintaining a large trade surplus (exporting more than it imported) thus allowing the dollar to be supplied as credit to other countries in order to be a means of exchange for US-produced commodities.[6]



As with other aspects of the post-war settlement, this implied a concrete link between the exploitation of workers (i.e. the amount of value produced) and the amount of money capital in circulation. In recent years this linkage has appeared to become more tenuous as finance capital has grown vastly in proportion to production (for example, no individual state has the reserves necessary to compete with currency speculators on the foreign exchange markets—as Britain discovered when the pound was forced to leave the European Exchange Rate Mechanism [ERM] on 'Black Wednesday', 16th September 1992) but is in reality no less essential because capitalism is always intrinsically based upon wage labour.

The imposition of the Bretton Woods agreement was shortly followed by the creation of a number of accompanying institutions and agreements to assist and safeguard its terms. These included the now notorious International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT). The IMF was originally set up to insulate the Bretton Woods system from attacks by speculators or from short-term trade imbalances by providing governments with emergency loans to support their currencies on the foreign exchange markets. The World Bank's purpose was to provide governments with longer term loans necessary for the development and reconstruction of their economies so that they had no excuse for not competing in the world market.

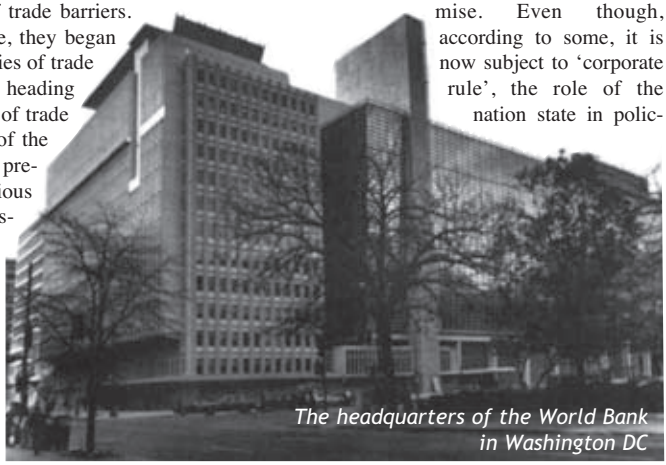
The opening up of all national economies to 'free trade' was also a major concern of the United States. The world depression of the 1930s followed by the war resulted in the growth of trade barriers. As the recovery gathered pace, they began to be dismantled through a series of trade agreements under the overall heading of GATT. The present growth of trade integration is the completion of the process of recovering ground previously lost—regaining previous unity, but of course on a massively increased scale due to the growth of the global economy relative to its pre-war size.

Social Democracy and Keynesianism

However the re-establishment of global and national capital accumulation and the resultant 20 period of economic boom could not have been accomplished without the imposition of more fundamental and concrete forms of social and political organisation to again restore (relative) domestic stability. These were—in the West at least—social democracy and Keynesian economic management and planning. It is important to note that these existed within the context of the global economy and not just on a separate national basis. These 'social forms' were dominant within 'advanced' capitalist societies until they began to founder in the late 1960s. Their retreat and increasing ineffectiveness as a means of management in the face of massive class struggle and related 'structural' faults, resulting in the major crises of the 1970s, is possibly the main reason for the state that capitalism is in today.

The disorganisation of the European working class post-1945 meant that it was forced to enter into the so-called 'class compromise'. This essentially meant foregoing unity and mass struggle, at least temporarily, in return for representation within individual nation states through the medium of social democracy. Social democracy can be defined as the representation of the working class as labour, within capital and the state—politically through social democratic parties and economically through trades unions. In practice this meant varying degrees of consultation between trade unions, governments and employers to allow for economic planning and the co-ordination of social policy.

The nation state gained a new significance in the post-war era because it assumed the role of policing, maintaining and organising the new class compromise. Even though, according to some, it is now subject to 'corporate rule', the role of the nation state in polic-



The headquarters of the World Bank in Washington DC



ing, maintaining and organising labour power remains undiminished. All that has changed are the forms that this takes; for example breaking or 'restructuring' entrenched sectors of the working class instead of accommodating them, imposing and encouraging casualisation etc.

Capitalist development was consolidated around distinct national economies that enjoyed a degree of autonomy in terms of economic cycles and the extent to which the working class was integrated within state planning. It was an example of divide and rule in so far as concessions were made to *national* working classes as opposed to the working class as a whole. This allowed the 'defence of the national interest' to be invoked where necessary as a partial barrier to more internationalist tendencies amongst some workers; dockers for example have a long tradition of international solidarity and support as was seen recently during the Liverpool dockers dispute.[7]

However the relative disunity of the working class was not shared by the capitalists. Although different sectors of the capitalist system have a contradictory relationship at the best of times, their unity in terms of the common pursuit of profit always remains undiminished. In fact it could be argued that capitalism in this period was more global and united than it has been since, due to the dominant position of the US and the virtual hegemony of the dollar as the world's currency.

The practical importance of social democracy for the working class was that it provided a framework through which concessions could be demanded and won from capital on a national basis. The price of this set-up was that instead of existing as an autonomous force against capitalism, "the aspirations and demands of the working class could be harnessed as the motor for capital accumulation,"[8] i.e. in exchange for improvements in health care, housing provision, education and social security the working class surrendered control over production and accepted the 'Fordist deal'.



This meant that production-line type work was introduced, removing the need for many highly skilled workers or any direct connection to what was being produced. Productivity and production were increased by stepping up the exploitation of the workforce allowing both wages and profits to rise, thus creating the demand to absorb the increase in production. Fordism was a system based upon mass production and mass consumption. It was premised on an implicit trade-off between increased alienation and boredom at work and increased consumption during 'leisure' or 'free' time—dissatisfaction turned into demand. The ever increasing rate of exploitation in turn expanded the total amount of capital in circulation and made possible the growth of finance capital and the boom in credit and lending.

The Keynesian state was an integral part of this process. It backed up Fordism through what economists call 'inflationary demand management', maintaining rising levels of demand through 'deficit financing'—state expenditure based on credit. This was to be repaid by the returns from future exploitation. On the national level this took the form of guaranteed full employment, growth and social welfare spending. Globally, "the centre of Keynesian demand management was the regulation of the international flow of capital through the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates; the regulation of international deficit financing of demand on the world market on the basis of an inflationary supply of dollars from the dominant US economy to the rest of the world."[9] It was basically a global system of 'book-keeping' which alternated between inflationary support of domestic economic growth and deflationary pressure on it. Mortgaging the future to pay for the present was the essence of Keynesian demand management, a flaw that was to prove its undoing.

Decolonisation to the 'Green Revolution'

The situation outside the 'advanced' capitalist countries was very different. The post-war years were primarily characterised by bloody national liberation struggles against the old colonial powers—mainly Britain and France but also Belgium (in the Belgian Congo) and Portugal (in Angola). Nationalist struggles against France in Algeria and Vietnam were particularly ferocious, leading to French withdrawals from both colonies after a series of costly military



The Mau Mau: Better Dread than Dead

It was in many ways the massive anti-colonial struggles of the 1950s and the immediate post-war period in the 'Third World' that inspired the more well-known revolts in the West in the 1960s. For example, the struggle against the French in Algeria was well-known to the partisans of Paris' 1968 'May events'. The knowledge of the atrocities committed against the Algerians during the 8-year war for independence radicalised the students of Paris and made them realise what the French state was capable of.



The British experienced a similar African insurgency against Imperial rule in the 1950s in Kenya. The struggle for land and freedom in Kenya was led by the Mau Mau—a guerrilla force composed mainly of members of the Kikuyu tribe who waged a sometimes very brutal war against the white settlers. As a symbol of their identity, the Mau Mau grew their hair in dreadlocks which they never cut. Seven initiation cuts marked the body of one who had taken the Mau Mau oaths.

Under the British, Kenya operated a strict policy of racial separation, similar to South African apartheid, utilising a very strict identity card system. However, as with South Africa, separation effectively meant domination: native Africans were forced on to 'tribal trust lands', the British having stolen their traditional tribal lands. Political agitation around the issue of stolen lands had been taking place since the 1920s, but to no avail.

When Kikuyu soldiers returned from World War II, in which they had fought for the British, they returned radicalised to a country still run by paternalistic colonial administrators and plagued by racist missionaries. These ex-servicemen provided the nucleus for the Mau Mau guerrilla army. The Mau Mau were dedicated to driving white farmers from the rich heartlands of Kenya—they were daring and merciless, attacking first isolated farms and police outposts and later the vast concentration camps where Mau Mau suspects were imprisoned by the British. During their 11-year struggle for independence from the British, the Mau Mau hid out in the large areas of wilderness, forest and mountains in Kenya. They blended into the forests making it impossible for the British to find them.

The British responded by pioneering many of the classic 'counter-insurgency' techniques that would later become famous in Vietnam—for example, the resettlement of the entire indigenous population in special controlled villages to separate them from the guerrillas. Ninety thousand people were imprisoned and tortured in detention camps, ten thousand people had land confiscated, and a further half a million were forced into protected villages. Inmates of the detention camps were regularly beaten and abused, and thousands of innocent people died of disease and malnutrition. In the years up to 1956 over 10,000 Mau Mau lost their lives in the struggle against the British—many hanged on the gallows in mass executions.

John Nottingham, a district officer during the period of emergency said: "One day six Mau Mau suspects were brought into a police station in the neighbouring district to mine. The British police inspector in charge lined them up against a wall and shot them. There was no trial." Asked if he thought that the actions of the colonial forces amounted to human rights abuses, Mr Nottingham said: "If throwing a phosphorous grenade into a thatched hut with a sleeping family inside isn't a human rights abuse then I don't know what is."[39]



and political blunders. In Algeria and other countries the general disruption opened up space for more progressive (although mostly not quite revolutionary) social movements, which existed against both colonial rule and the 'states in waiting' of the nationalists.[10]

Unfortunately the main and lasting effect of decolonisation was to open up vast new markets and opportunities for increased and more efficient exploitation. Even though exploitation had clearly taken place on a vast scale under colonial rule, the attempt had not been made to integrate people into the capitalist mode of production—to make them into wage workers. Extractive industries such as mining and oil production had operated in the 'Third World' for many years previously, but such enterprises don't necessarily require the generalised imposition of a new set of social relations in order to function.

The process of turning 'Third World' peasants into proletarians is in some ways very similar to the development of capitalism in Britain and elsewhere. The capitalisation of agriculture through the enclosure of common lands, the mechanisation of food production and the production of food surpluses to feed workers who are no longer able to produce their own means of subsistence are the necessary first steps. Urbanisation and the creation of a 'reserve army of labour' from those who have been forced to leave the land are then the necessary additional steps for further capitalist development.

Some of the first and most significant *capitalist* forays into the 'Third World' were made in agriculture—the 'Green Revolution'. In 1965 the first commercially viable High Yielding Variety (HYV) rice was released by a laboratory in the Philippines. The aim was to rapidly increase food production at a time when demand created by population growth appeared to be outstripping supply in some areas of the world such as India and the Philippines (although as is the case with present food shortages, the causes are factors other than lack of productive capacity; even at the height of its famine, Ethiopia was still exporting tobacco and coffee to the West). The 'Green Revolution' was portrayed simply as a technological fix to the food problem, however, in reality it worked against the very people it purported to help. As with all technology developed by capitalism it didn't operate merely on a technical level; it actively changed the social relations amongst agricultural producers and opened the way for further 'development' and exploitation.

The new varieties of wheat and rice were not available to all farmers or even in all areas. They required intensive irrigation and fertile soil and were only accessible to wealthy and politically connected farmers within those areas. The additional inputs required such as fertilisers, pesticides as well as the seed itself meant that peasant farmers on traditional small holdings were excluded. This new form of production also favoured mechanisation and economies of scale, thus enabling landowners to reduce their workforces and effectively drive large numbers off the land and away from independent food production into the cities and the newly forming labour markets. The new varieties could not be cultivated using traditional methods, and their success was almost completely dependent upon products supplied by Western companies.

The 'Green Revolution' was just one instance in a continuing process of exploitation by Western capital and domestic rulers. This has added significance at present in the context of the growth of biotechnology. The arguments and campaigns for and against are so similar that they could almost be said to be repeating those which took place 30 years ago.

III. 1968—1979: Class Struggle, Crisis and Debt

Academics, including those who have recently written on the subject of globalisation such as David Korten or Gerry Mander,[11] tend to see the demise of Keynesianism and other institutional arrangements (and the result which they call globalisation) as the result of 'structural faults' (such as exchange rate imbalances) within the capitalist system—a position known as 'objectivism' because it discounts or actively ignores the pivotal role that human (subjective) and more specifically class intervention and conflict plays in effecting and changing the course of history. Their analysis undoubtedly contains moments of truth but is at best only a very partial view.

The growth of world trade during the 1960s had brought with it a rapid expansion in the volume of international money capital being traded, as well as the development of global capital markets. The development of the Eurodollar markets in particular, signalled that the institutional arrangements such as



Bretton Woods, which had linked and constrained the international flow of money to the national accumulation of productive capital (i.e. industry, manufacturing etc.), were becoming strained. The recovery of other capitalist economies led to a relative decline in US economic superiority. Dollars which had previously been repatriated in exchange for US-produced commodities were increasingly transformed into reserves in European banks. These reserves were then used as a source of credit for both public authorities and private capital. By 1969 other countries held $40 billion—a figure that far exceeded the US gold reserves. The basis of Bretton Woods had been severely undermined.[12]

But it was the struggles of the new generation of post-war proletarians that led the strain to become a breach.

This new generation, which formed within the context of the post-war settlement and the Fordist production line, brought with it new demands and aspirations. These were expressed in two principle ways; on one hand screwing everything they could get out of the bosses and the state in wage concessions and increased public spending—demands that had to be met in order to maintain the status quo and stave off more radical demands. On the other hand, the re-emerging class conflict didn't limit itself simply to questions of degrees of control within the workplace; the other (interconnected) side expressed at its most radical the refusal of work and capitalist social relations in general. Dissatisfaction with factory and office life brought with it a more generalised contestation which was by no means limited to workers; other proletarians (such as the unemployed and housewives), malcontents and students, all seized the opportunity to exploit the relatively weak position that capitalism was in at the time.

The Refusal of Work

A global wave of strikes, riots and mass social upheaval, some of which openly confronted the state and the trade unions, left the capitalist world reeling under the strain. It had taken a body blow but by no means a fatal one, as events that followed in the 1970s were to prove. The US was hit by urban insurgencies that burned Watts, Newark, Detroit and other major cities, as well as by the student and anti-war movements and other disruptions such as the civil rights and black power movements. New insurgencies broke out in Southeast Asia and Latin America, often of dubious political content but expressions of the times nonetheless.



Paris, May '68



The best known European example, with which most people are familiar to some degree, is the near-revolution in France in May 1968, when millions of workers, students and other proletarians joined together in a brief but intense moment of mass struggle. However this represents only a small part of the picture; for example highly significant but lesser known struggles took place into and throughout the 1970s. The Italian 'Hot Autumn' of 1969 marked the beginning of 10 years of struggle. Many strikers and other rebels took part in activities which went beyond simply stopping work or occupying the workplace. In 1971 Polish strikers took over gas and transport services, whilst in Italy, "squatting, 'social strikes' by bus drivers, hospital staff and supermarket cashiers providing (respectively) transport, healthcare and food free of charge, electricity workers cutting off supplies to bureaucrats or firms and a thousand other instances",[13] showed the extent to which the dull compulsion and isolation of capitalist social relations were rejected. Sometimes this took the form of gestures which grasped towards something better, but more often it was refusal and rejection—*everything* came under attack, but the lack of enough attempts to transform society gave the impetus back to capital when the revolutionary wave began to recede. "Radicals had disrupted a social logic, not shifted into a new one."[14]

Capital Takes Flight

For the capitalists, the squeeze on profits from ever-increasing wage demands, strikes and random stoppages meant that solutions other than Keynesianism and 'demand management' would have to found. The answer lay in a three-pronged strategy of *restructuring*. In the old established industries, man-



Students in Rio de Janeiro opposed to Brasil's US-backed military regime hurl rocks at riot police during riots in April 1968.

In the '50s, US multinationals invested heavily in Brasil and there was a vast programme of industrialisation and 'development'. The *Wall Street Journal* asked: "Is there any other place in the world where such profits can be obtained?" These profits were won at the cost of massive social inequality and poverty in Brasil. However the period was also characterised by the radical struggles of large groups of peasants such as the Ligas Campesinas (Peasants League) and Movimento dos Agricultores Sem Terra (MASTER).

By the early '60s the IMF and the USA had started demanding huge debt repayment programmes and 'anti-inflationary policies'. This effectively required the civilian government to crush militant workers and peasants and bring them to heel. Instead in 1964 the civilian government, under pressure from the mass struggles of workers and peasants, promised to nationalise the oil refineries and authorise peasant's appropriation of unused land. The response of the army and the multinationals was brutal. In April 1964 there was a US-backed military coup in which thousands were assassinated as the military police unleashed a reign of terror and crushed all dissent.

However in 1968 there was an upsurge of resistance to the military regime. Led largely by students inspired by the rebellions in France and Mexico and by the Cuban revolution, a wave of revolt swept cities across the country. The students were joined by 15,000 striking metal workers. The pro-democracy movement gained strength throughout the 1970s (three million industrial workers went on strike in 1979 alone), there were struggles against huge hydro-electric schemes and peasant land occupations. This fruit of this today is the Movimento Sem Terra—Brasil's movement of landless peasants—one of the main threats to the Brasilian capitalists' project of neo-liberalism.[40]



agement attempted to limit workers' influence over the production process through forms of re-organisation such as decentralisation and outsourcing and the introduction of automation. This was used to attack the old 'worker fortresses' such as Detroit, Renault-Billancourt, Alsace, the Ruhr etc. The landmark in this process was the turn of the balance of power at the Italian car manufacturers Fiat, which for years had been plagued by continual stoppages, mass assemblies and absenteeism at its Turin plant. Secondly, new industries such as electronics, information technology and the 'service sector' were developed. New work relations could be established in these industries relatively easily since the most entrenched sectors of the working class had been effectively bypassed. Thirdly capital 'took flight' to the 'Third World' where labour and natural resources were (and still are) plentiful and cheap.



Milan '69: demonstrators attack a policeman at the beginning of the 'Hot Autumn'.

As the crisis and the problems in the industrialised areas gathered pace, this shift to the 'Third World' was seen as an increasingly attractive option, largely due to the fact that it was a relatively immediate solution. Other tactics required for the most part a long-term commitment to progressively wearing down resistance before profitability could be increased.

Throughout the 1970s, capital flooded into certain areas of the 'Third World', such as Brasil, Mexico and South Korea, creating what have become known as the Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs). This process was greatly accelerated by the quadrupling of the price of crude oil in 1974 by the world's main producers, the OPEC[15] countries, which "…served to liquidate and then divert huge sums of capital away from industry which was committed to various national economies within the Atlantic axis, into the hands of the banks and the international circuits of money capital that owed little or no allegiance to any state."[16]

This liquidity is the ideal form for capital, but it cannot increase itself without being 'grounded' in a concrete form—without having wage labourers producing both material and immaterial things. It can never permanently escape from its own contradictions; wherever it moves to, it creates workers who have a tendency to do problematic things like demand higher wages and go on strike.

It was in this period that the NICs, and to a lesser degree the 'Third World' in general, began to accumulate massive debts. The influx of capital was mainly in the form of loans or production facilities (for example, factories, mines etc.) owned by corporations based in the northern hemisphere. The loans were mainly used to finance prestige projects which had little material benefit for the majority of the population—or to line the pockets of the ruling classes.

However, this attempt by capital to escape from its enemy and re-engage on more favourable terrain was undermined by the central contradiction that accumulation in the NICs was dependent upon continued economic growth in the West (which remained the most important region). The economies of the West were simultaneously undermined on two fronts; firstly 'capital flight' had grown to such an extent that in countries with a 'poor industrial record' such as Britain it amounted to a virtual 'investment strike' and secondly, capital was still unable to contain wage demands.

Origins of the Debt Crisis

By the end of the decade the West's ability to sustain general profitability and economic growth was undermined to the point where all the economies in the Western world were plunged into recession, which was inevitably accompanied by a corresponding slump in world trade. The 'anti-inflationary policies' aimed at wage control which had been pursued



had had little obvious effect, with the result that by the end of the 1970s, capitalist planning agencies such as the IMF were calling for urgent globally co-ordinated measures to attack inflation. These would include 'tight money' (control over the money supply through high interest rates which lessened the attractiveness of credit and caused more generally a reduction in the ratio of debt to gross domestic product [GDP—roughly speaking the total sum of 'economic activities']) and cuts in social expenditure, as well as breaking 'structural rigidities' in the labour markets, e.g. trade unions.[17] As is usually the case with economics the banality of the language bears no relation to the reality that is actually being referred to.

These were the policies that became known as 'monetarism' (as well as being loosely described as 'Thatcherism' or 'Reaganomics') which when adopted by the world's largest economy, the US, resulted in the global recession and sharp interest rate rises that triggered the debt crisis.

A number of 'Third World' economies had borrowed heavily from major banks and other lenders including the World Bank, to finance rapid 'development' and industrialisation, leaving them with massive debts and interest payments. Consequently when interest rates rose and the value and volume of the exports which they used to service the debts fell, they found themselves unable to pay. In 1981 the Mexican government threatened to default on its loan repayments and started the 'Third World debt crisis'. This threatened to provoke the complete collapse of the international banking system—an outcome that was only narrowly avoided due to the intervention of the IMF and the World Bank backed up by co-ordinated efforts on the part of the major industrial powers.



Although the attempt to outmanoeuvre the working class in industrial countries through capital flight had been forced to a halt by its own contradictions, "it did serve to impose the new economic reality of global finance capital and in doing so laid the ground for the further development of capital restructuring against the working class in industrialised economies."[18] The nature of the crisis and recession made it increasingly clear that economic policy had to be compatible with the demands of global finance capital.

IV. The '80s—Defeat, Misery and Monetarism

The results of the debt crisis were twofold. Firstly, debtor nations in the 'Third World' were forced by the IMF to adopt Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) as means of 'saving' their economies and enabling them to attempt to keep up repayments on their loans. Secondly, in the industrialised countries, governments began to change their economic policies away from Keynesianism towards monetarism in an attempt to attract international money capital with increasing interest rates and disinflationary economic policies. In reality the pursuit of disinflationary economic policy meant mounting a concerted attack on the gains won by the working class in the preceding decades—the imposition of austerity. All governments whether conservative or socialist were forced to do this in order to keep wages down and slash public spending on the social wage (e.g. welfare, free healthcare, services etc.) At the same time they exchanged the strategy of 'tight money' for an expansion of credit—a socialisation of debt as opposed to its eradication. This "helped to decompose the homogeneity of resistance to austerity on a global scale" by integrating parts of the working class through a credit-sustained boom. The boom acted as a neutralising agent by helping to co-opt parts of the working class into the project of prosperity (for some).[19]

The strategy of using the unions to accommodate the working class was swiftly replaced by one of outright confrontation. Thatcher and Reagan were initially the major exponents of this policy because they were in the best position to use it. In both Britain and the US the unions had largely contained and defused working class militancy but had therefore simultaneously undermined their own *raison d'être* as mediators of this militancy and been left weakened. In Britain, the relationship between the Labour governments of the '70s and the unions has



been caricatured as 'beer and sandwiches at No. 10' indicating its cosy nature. However, due to their need to maintain their role as mediators (and moderators) the unions didn't have the foresight to anticipate the loss of political and policy influence that they suffered when James Callaghan was ejected from office in 1979 and the previously friendly ear was replaced by an implacable foe. Though of course it wasn't the union bureaucracy that bore the brunt of the attempts to impose unemployment and austerity.

The attack on the most entrenched sectors of the working class rapidly gathered pace; protracted, bitter, losing battles were fought first by steel workers, then miners and printers. The 1984 miners' strike was a turning point in the sense that the miners had traditionally been the strongest sector of the working class in the UK—their '74 mass strike brought about the downfall of the Conservative government. Although governments in other industrialised countries attempted to an extent to follow suit, they didn't have the same degree of success. They lacked the vigour of Thatcherism because they couldn't afford to sacrifice industry to the same extent Britain had been able to due to the strength and significance of its financial sector. This can be seen for example in the comparative lack of collective class struggle in this country at present as opposed to France.

Monetarist ideology promised to "roll back the frontiers of the state" (in Thatcher's words) and to bring freedom and prosperity for all. The reality however was very different. De-regulation in some sectors of the economy was not matched by a generalised retreat in other areas of life controlled by the state—in fact the reverse was true. A 'free' economy necessitates a strengthening of the state, as a defence against the unrest provoked by impoverishment and the (re-) imposition of work. In the US, restructuring, massive welfare cuts and the imposition of workfare on a national basis have been accompanied by a huge rise in the prison population, the 'three strikes' law[20] and 100,000 new cops. This is an aspect of globalisation that some of its critics appear to have overlooked when they bemoan an apparent loss of state power to corporations.

Structural Adjustment: Global Chile

Two major perspectives exist on the debt crisis, both of which share the assumption that it is a threat or obstacle to capitalist development. For the Right the crisis has been viewed as potentially threatening the international banking system and 'stable growth' of the creditor economies through default by major debtor countries; hence the need for harsh IMF programmes to make them 'pay up'. For the Left the crisis and the Right's 'solutions' to it are seen as the main obstacle to the 'development' of 'Third World' economies.[21] A choice between hard or soft versions of capitalism would be no choice at all even if it was possible to *choose*. The fact that existence in some parts of the world is less harsh than in others does not mean that it is possible to reorient capitalist development in a 'better' direction through more 'democracy' or well-intentioned liberal proposals or campaigns.[22] The debt crisis is the result of what capitalism has been *forced* to do in response to proletarian resistance in order to sustain its constant need for growth, expansion and accumulation; it has been used as a "key instrument" in "shifting the balance of class forces to its side on both poles of the debt relation."[23]

Although workers in the West have suffered repression and hardship, the fate of the working class in the 'Third World' has been considerably worse. The result of the debt crisis was the (still ongoing) imposition of SAPs, initially in those countries such as Mexico which had threatened to default on their loan repayments and gradually extending to cover almost every country in South and Central America, Africa, Eastern Europe and Asia.

SAPs were devised by the IMF and the World Bank as a means of reducing inflation, leading to a favourable balance of payments, reducing government debt, and making national industries more efficient and workers more productive. This, it was claimed, would inevitably lead to a reduction in international debt, and acceptance of SAPs was



Television, according to a Rockefeller Foundation project, "is the quickest and easiest way to reach large numbers of Africans... African social message videos can have a positive impact on behaviour change."



required as a prerequisite for future loans or payment rescheduling.

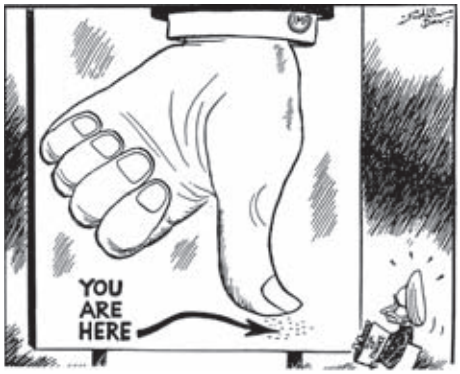
The concrete measures that SAPs consist of are essentially modelled on monetarist economist Milton Friedman's formula for post-Allende Chile, after Pinochet's 1973 coup. These include the liberalisation of trade; the end of capital controls and the promotion of 'free enterprise zones' or 'export processing zones' (e.g. the 'maquiladoras' in northern Mexico), which guarantee favourable financial terms, the use of local infrastructures and large amounts of cheap labour power. SAPs also enforce the free convertibility of national currency, the reduction of government budgets and employment, the end of subsidies for education, health and subsistence goods and the privatisation of state industries.[24]

Third World governments are not helpless to resist the demands of global financial capital, rather they depend on its help to be able to resist their own populations.

Structural adjustment (and to a lesser extent economic 'development' in general) requires internal repression. In Chile it cost the lives of 30,000 workers. Measures such as banning student organisations, intimidating unions and expanding internal security forces have become ubiquitous. In Nigeria the penalty for sabotaging oil production is death.

Of course this situation has not just been accepted—resistance has been constant and ongoing. Massive uprisings, rioting and insurrections have become endemic but go largely unreported in the West. In May and June 1989 at the same time as Chinese students and army mutineers were being massacred as a result of the Tiananmen Square protests to the 'horror' of the Western world, a comparable number of anti-SAP rioters were killed by Nigerian security forces during a wave of uprisings in the main southern cities of Lagos, Bendel and Port Harcourt. "Crowds of students, women and the unemployed jointly confronted the police and burned many government buildings to the ground. In Bendel the prison was ransacked, hundreds of prisoners were set free and food was confiscated from the prison pantry and later distributed to the hospitals where patients notoriously starve unless they can provide their own food."[25]

The general effect of SAPs on proletarians has been nothing short of devastating, whilst those in positions of power have in general continued to directly or indirectly benefit in a variety of ways. For this reason it is as implausible to talk of 'India' or 'Brasil' being exploited as countries as it is to consider 'Britain' for example as an exploiter, since it is quite clear that in any given nation state the population do not simply exist as equal citizens with common unifying interests. To talk of rich and poor nations obscures the reality that the rich and poor exist within nations. Such formulations implicitly assume that everyone in the industrialised countries is rich and everyone in the 'Third World' poor. The ruling classes in the 'Third World' obviously don't bear an equal amount of the burden of debt as peasants or workers (if they bear any at all—Mobuto the ex-president of Zaire siphoned off an estimated $8 billion, Suharto, ex-dictator of Indonesia, $16 billion), and are as rich as the rich in the West; conversely proletarians in the West cannot be equated with the bosses and the state.



Finance Minister Singh's bargaining position with the IMF as seen by the Pioneer.

Although the population of the 'Third World' had suffered the effects of economic 'development' for some time previously, the onslaught precipitated by the imposition of austerity measures in the 1980s was much worse. The need to increase exports and cut spending meant a corresponding decrease in living standards.

In countries such as Mexico and Brasil wages have been cut in real terms (i.e. wages have stayed the same or risen less than the rate of inflation, so the amount that can be bought with them gets progressively less) by between a third and a half since the debt crisis began, whilst malnutrition has become endemic as food prices have soared. In Africa the situation is far worse with many areas on the verge of mass starvation.

For those reliant on subsistence farming the picture is also bleak—the need to grow cash crops to exchange for hard currency (i.e. dollars) has mas-



sively accelerated an ongoing process of forcing peasant farmers off the most fertile lands and either into urban poverty or on to poor quality land that provides increasingly marginal returns. The greatest example of this is the practice of dumping landless peasants in rainforest areas where once the trees are cleared the soil quickly becomes infertile. This has happened, for example, in the western provinces of Brasil such as Rondonia and in the Indonesian province of West Papua. (See "Rumble in the Jungle, this issue of *DoD*.)

Rapidly increased environmental destruction such as deforestation, soil erosion, pollution, mining and oil extraction is a further consequence of the debt crisis. The drive to maximise exports at all costs has not had the desired effect—the prices of primary commodities have plummeted as the world market has been saturated by the produce of 'Third World' economies in competition with each other.

Even those countries which didn't accrue massive debts have been badly effected as they are also dependent upon the export of primary products and are then of course subjected to the IMF's own special remedy.

It has been estimated that between 1982 and 1990 an incredible $1,345 billion has been transferred from the 'South' into the coffers of states, banks and financial institutions in the 'North'.

V. 1990—? Global Finance Capital, Crisis and Yet More Struggles

So despite having both numbers and organisation, workers were unable to win against a constantly mobile opponent from their defensive position. Not even the most entrenched and militant sectors of the class could hold out indefinitely as they became surplus to requirements. Labour is only as strong as it is necessary—"they lost because the economy deprived them of their function which is their social weapon. Nothing will force capital to hire labour which is not useful to it."[26] Nothing is immune to the pressures of world trade as the collapse of state capitalism in the former Soviet Union showed. The same market forces that were making thousands redundant in Liverpool or Detroit were busy smashing the 'Chinese walls' that blocked the flow of money and commodities into Moscow.

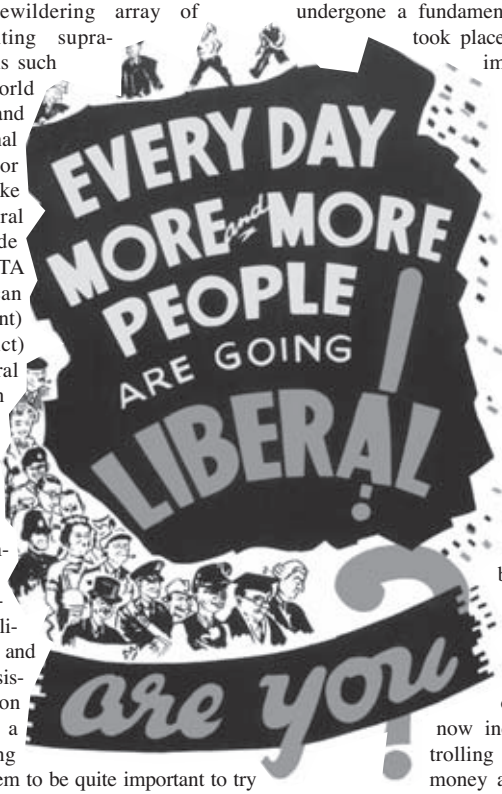
If the '80s showed the power and autonomy of deregulated global finance capital, what new developments have occurred since and how should we understand them? Although in the light of the recent



The 1984 miners strike—never before had so many cops been on the streets and many alleged that some of them were troops.



crises it would seem that capitalist triumphalism and proclamations of a 'New World Order' were somewhat premature, it is certainly true that global finance capital and its ideology of neo-liberalism are currently growing in self-assurance and audacity, although now with a degree of trepidation. This is reflected in a variety of ways, one of which is the preoccupation in oppositional (and mainstream) politics with globalisation, neo-liberalism, free trade and an almost bewildering array of acronyms representing supra-national organisations such as the WTO (World Trade Organisation) and the IMF (International Monetary Fund), or trade agreements like GATT (the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs), NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) or the (now defunct) MAI (Multilateral Agreement on Investment).



In mainstream politics globalisation is talked of in terms of accepting irreversible new economic realities and constraints and is a scapegoat for unpopular policies. In oppositional and grassroots politics, resistance to globalisation has been adopted as a central campaigning issue. So it would seem to be quite important to try to understand the changes and strategies that lie behind the acronyms and capitalist propaganda. In order to be able to resist we have to acknowledge and develop an understanding of the new lines of attack being taken against us and of the ways in which the relationships between states, capital and class have changed. We have to go beyond the banalities offered by 'off the peg' analyses from left/liberal academics who use the same categories and assumptions as the capitalists from a negative perspective—they understand the world in the same way, merely believing it needs a bit of tinkering with to set it right.

The anti-globalisation orthodoxy holds that recent changes in the global economy constitute a significant and possibly definitive break with the structures and forms that have until recently characterised capitalist society. They argue that although the world market for commodities, capital and money has been in existence for several centuries, since the early 1970s the framework for the production, consumption and exchange of commodities and money has undergone a fundamental change. Previously this took place on a national or national-imperial basis, but now transnational corporations, banks and supranational agencies such as the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO are 'de-linking' themselves from political attachments to their nation-state 'homes'. They have 'deterritorialised' and 'globalised' themselves and as a consequence have the capacity to move capital, money and expertise at will to the places which offer the highest returns. In tandem the "legal and financial framework for this global capacity for movement and integration has been slowly but definitively put into place." And "consequently nation states, provincial governments, municipalities, local officials and labour unions are now increasingly helpless in controlling the movement of capital, money and jobs" to the extent that workers and citizens can no longer rely on an increasingly powerless 'democratic government' to fight their corner.[27] "Corporations Rule the World", as David Korten put it.

Although this interpretation of our present situation is premised on a number of deeply flawed and naive assumptions, which obscure more than they reveal, we shouldn't in response be tempted to downplay the significance of change in recent years. To do so would be to fail to recognise the importance of globalisation as a strategy attempting to fully integrate as much of the world's population as



possible into the capitalist mode of production. For those already integrated, it "naturalises the market and the economy to such an extent that it presents the latter as an autonomous force to which we must bow." This is however only an apparent autonomy because the economy can only be autonomous to the extent that humans give up their autonomy and their freedom to create their own conditions of life.[28] Globalisation is not an unstoppable objective process but a strategy which could in principle be halted.

Finance Capital and the Speculators

The exponential growth of monetary and financial markets is undeniable; estimates of the daily value of transactions on the foreign exchange markets in New York, London and Tokyo alone vary from $650 billion up to a trillion dollars. The transactions are largely composed of currency speculation aimed at making a profit from the movement of exchange rates. Given the sums involved, even small deviations in the rate of interest or other factors can cause huge flows of money which in turn affect exchange rates and cause economic difficulties for the 'victim' government, problems passed on in the form of hardship, spending cuts etc. This growth of money being made from trading in money has sometimes been wrongly called a 'casino economy', or as in the June 18th publicity, a 'game'. Even the most abstract and seemingly savagely pointless capitalist activities exist in a material and social context. It is not sufficient to merely point out the effects of currency speculation—the question of who or what is the target also has to be asked. Speculation is directed at those countries whose domestic policies are in some way incompatible with global competitivity requirements, i.e. those who have not made sufficient attempts to subjugate or co-opt workers or who display any weakness by bowing to pressure over controlling public finance and social expenditure.

Those countries which have begun a 'healthy restructuring' program are rewarded with currency stability and the loyalty of the speculators. For proletarians, however, the choice between the two financial regimes is a false one; what is not lost through austerity measures is lost through unemployment and income-eroding inflation. Most people experience the *economy* (whether global, national or local) not as a source of opportunity but of constraint.

The Globalisation of Production

The process of restructuring in the West which led to the movement of production facilities to the 'Third World' where lower wages and a greater intensity of work can be imposed has already been described. 'Free-export zones' created by 'Third World' governments continue to increase in size; total employment in Mexico's 'maquiladoras' has grown from 110,000 in 1980 to 500, 000 in 1992. In Asia (South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia etc.) about 700,000 are employed in similar 'zones'.

Kicking it off in Korea



A South Korean student delivers a flying kick at riot police shields in Seoul during a demonstration demanding the resignation of President Kim Young-sam, April 1996.

It was primarily the South Korean strike wave of '96-'97 that sparked off the Asian crisis of 1997. Millions of workers went on strike to oppose neoliberalism before the grim gaze of a nuclear-armed US occupation army. In June '95 President Kim Young-sam warned that a planned strike at a state-owned telephone company would be akin to "an attempt to overthrow the state". But that was merely the beginning… December and January 1996-'97 saw the largest series of strikes and walkout in South Korean history, involving hundreds of thousands of workers protesting against the new labour legislation introducing casualisation and allowing companies to lay off and fire workers more easily. A general strike was called on January 15th 1997—600,000 workers downed tools. Over the following three weeks, the wave of strikes 'cost' South Korean corporations over $3 billion in lost production.

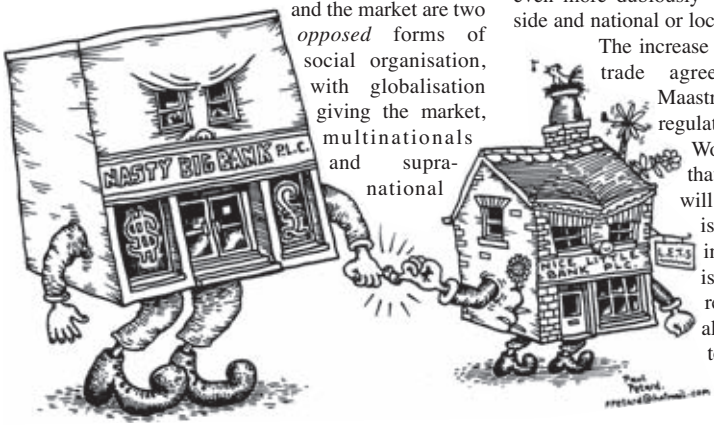
Source: *Midnight Notes* No. 12 (1997), pp. 41-44



Social conflict and struggle also continue to increase (between 1989 and 1993 Malaysia saw a 350% increase in the number of working days lost through official strikes alone), with some enterprises already being forced to relocate within the 'Third World', for example from South Korea to Indonesia. For the Asian textile industries this is particularly easy as "the clothing industry uses little capital and is very mobile. All you need is a shed, some sewing machines, and lots of cheap nimble fingers."[29] The strategy for creating an international division of labour, globally subdivided according to comparative costs is ongoing. Labour-intensive production which requires relatively little capital is destined for low-wage areas, whilst production which requires sophisticated technologies and services is located in those areas which offer a suitable structure and environment (most often the West). The factory becomes the global factory. Consequentially, to the extent that production is still based in transnational enterprises' 'home countries', the bargaining power of better paid domestic workers becomes threatened and disciplined. It is worth considering in this context the extent to which transnational corporations are actually *global*. They may have operations in a number of different countries and regions of the world, but the vast majority remain firmly based in their countries of origin in terms of the control of operations. Executive boards and management styles remain firmly national, as does the control of research and development. It is still completely possible to talk of 'national capital' or 'British capital' etc.

Capital and Nation States

One of the most common themes running throughout anti-globalisation politics is the idea that the state and the market are two *opposed* forms of social organisation, with globalisation giving the market, multinationals and supra-national bodies 'power over' the state with a resulting loss of 'sovereignty' and 'national autonomy'.[30] State and capital are not opposed to each other. If anything, the opposite is true—they exist in a contradictory unity—they are differentiated forms of domination *within* the relations that constitute the social order: states oppress their populations as much as managements exploit their workers. Capitalism lives and thrives on tensions and antagonisms; the central one being between capital and labour—it constantly tries to escape from insubordinate workers but needs them to be able to expand. Another tension is that between the needs of national states and the needs of global capital. The fact that a particular state will sometimes act against some capitalist enterprise or other does nothing to disprove the central point that there are no states or national governments which don't "ultimately derive their revenue and power from capital."[31]



As the importance of money capital has grown, the relationship between territorially fixed states and globally mobile capital has changed correspondingly. It is essential for nation states to be able to attract and retain capital within their borders. Hence national policy, through a combination of economic and social policy, co-option and enforcement is aimed at increasing their chances. The success of these policies is dependent upon establishing the conditions for expanded growth on a world scale. However participation in the financial summits and trade agreements that facilitate this growth carries the risk of economic disadvantage for particular nation states. *This* is where the conflict between 'global' and 'national' economic interests lies, not in an opposition between finance capital and corporations (or even more dubiously 'foreign' capital) on the one side and national or local economies on the other.

The increase in the numbers and scope of trade agreements (GATT, NAFTA, Maastricht etc.) and international regulatory bodies (the WTO, IMF, World Bank) is not something that has happened against the will of national states but in fact is in many ways a "state-led initiative whose primary aim is to restructure capital/labour relations."[32] The present global *re*-composition (as opposed to *de*-composition) of national states tends to *enhance* state power. Although their



room for manoeuvre over monetary and financial policies has been limited, their role in the policing and planning of labour power has become ever more important. Far from being outmoded or by-passed, in the global order nation states are as important as they ever have been. A central theme of this state re-organisation is a generalised shift of responsibility on to international regimes and 'independent', 'politically neutral' organisations (in the sense of left/right party politics), which amounts to an apparent de-politicisation of some areas of decision making. The first thing that Gordon Brown did after becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer was to hand over responsibility for monetary policy to the Bank of England. Similarly, membership of the WTO or the ERM (European Exchange Rate Mechanism) allows governments to plead helplessness in the face of 'external commitments', and to divert the blame for unpopular policies.[33]

Trade Agreements and Supra-national Organisations

There are a large number of international agreements and bodies in existence; the best known in terms of globalisation are the WTO, the IMF/World Bank, GATT, NAFTA and the indefinitely postponed MAI.

NAFTA was implemented on January 1st 1994, a date also marked by the start of the Zapatista uprising in Mexico. Its provisions are very similar to those which were to have been contained in the MAI, which would have applied globally and included all major economies as few if any would have taken the risk of being rendered comparatively uncompetitive. NAFTA effectively creates a borderless economic zone in North America encompassing Canada, the US and Mexico. As well as being an agreement on the free trade of goods and services it also gives incentives to companies wishing to operate within the three countries and removes barriers to foreign investment. The Mayan Indians in Chiapas describe it as a "death sentence" because it means further exploitation and poverty on top of their already dire situation.

The WTO was created at the 'Uruguay Round' (1986-'94) of GATT negotiations in order to regulate international trade and settle disputes. One of the main (and most reviled) requirements for membership of the WTO (or being a signatory to NAFTA), is that any national laws or regulations (environmental and labour legislation, for example, or the banning of certain toxic products) which obstruct 'free trade' are open to legal challenge by the disadvantaged party

France 1995



A CGT delegation leads a march during the general strike.

Two million people on the streets burning Roman candles, waving red and black banners, and singing the *Internationale*… A strike, spreading like wildfire from one sector to another through rank and file delegations… The switching of electricity on to cheap-rate by striking workers… Rioting coal miners… Shock waves reverberating throughout Europe, echoes in Germany and Belgium… And a feeling that anything is possible…

In May '95, the French government, under pressure from the foreign exchange markets, had announced a package of welfare cuts—the so-called 'Juppé plan'—but the markets were not going to have it all their own way…

In December 1995 over a million people throughout France demonstrated against Juppé's austerity measures. This was a clear attack on the new post-Maastricht Europe of austerity and cutbacks. The movement of winter '95 turned back the proposed neo-liberal reforms and seemed to offer the possibility of real social change. This was the biggest challenge to date against European capital's attempts to destroy the post-war settlement and to undo all the hard-won gains of the earlier decades of struggle.

"Will the Law of Economics condemn us to this? Let's smash the laws! So that we can struggle, speak to each other, and imagine other ways of living together. We must take back the time that wage slavery has stolen from us. Long live the GENERAL STRIKE! A country which is entirely on strike is a new world shaping itself!"—French strikers, 1995.[41]



through the WTO and the possibility of sanctions or fines being imposed as punishment if they are not removed. Whilst this horrifies those who naively cling to the belief that control by national governments is preferable because it is 'accountable' as opposed to control by the faceless unelected (Shock! Horror!) bureaucrats at the WTO, the reactions of those in power are particularly telling and oddly enough they don't seem to share this concern. During the recent banana dispute the US government, acting on *behalf* of US corporations who account for over 80% of banana imports into Europe, requested that the WTO force the European Union (EU) to revoke favourable terms granted to producers in former Caribbean colonies. Simultaneously the US imposed huge tariffs on a range of economically marginal products such as Scottish cashmere, whilst waiting for the WTO to carry out its role as adjudicator in trade disputes. The WTO panel decided that the EU's protectionism was a barrier to competition and imposed a fine. The British government, despite being the target of US sanctions seemed generally unconcerned (although it did make a show of 'defending' the insignificant parts of British industry that had been affected), pointing out that what was lost in some areas would be gained in others by using the process in reverse. The state will always protect the interests of capitalists, a function it will fulfil either democratically or dictatorially.

Too much of the time anti-globalisation amounts to an appeal to the state to take account of the wishes of some of its 'citizens' and return to the good old days of social democracy and national sovereignty when the nation state protected us against the worst excesses of the corporations. Aside from being a grotesque distortion of reality, these sort of calls and complaints are quite simply reactionary and should be challenged at all possible opportunities.[34] States and governments are complicit in the process of globalisation. We should be understand this and act accordingly.

Corporate Rule?

Fifty-one of the hundred largest economies in the world are transnational corporations. The combined sales of Ford and General Motors are bigger than the combined GDP of all Sub-Saharan Africa.[35] Statistics such as these are said to 'prove' that *corporations* rule over us, as opposed to capital and the state. (Although it should be pointed out that liberals probably would not see the state as being against us but rather corporations as being against the state which is supposed to represent us as free and equal citizens.) Corporations and capitalism do not amount to the same thing. Whilst it is undoubtedly true that corporations are capitalist, capitalism is not necessarily corporate.

Corporations are the dominant form in which capitalism exists at present, but capitalism is not a thing or a legal entity—it is a *social relation* between people, whereby the vast majority are forced to sell their labour-power in order to live. Small businesses are as capitalist as the largest transnational corporation. The fact that it would be strategically nonsensical to direct our efforts against small businesses which wield relatively little power and influence shouldn't mean that we see them as better or as an alternative to 'corporate power'. Capital always seeks to expand whatever form it is in. All large enterprises started off as small ones; Sainsbury's, for example, started out as a single grocer's shop.

Capitalist social relations impose themselves across the whole of society; there is no escape to be found in any activity *local* or global which reproduces wage labour and exchange value. The sad reality of local businesses is that they're not progressive 'alternatives' and in fact tend to be run by petty-minded shrivelled little tyrants, who think they're free because they're "their own boss", content with their island of illusory dictatorship, where power is reduced to short-changing the customers. Regardless of their longings for some fantasised former simplicity and local autonomy, regardless of the fact that they may call themselves anarchists and may certainly moan about central government and big business, they identify with their present means of survival and almost invariably call the cops when their niche within capitalist society is threatened, for example by looting .

As Gilles Dauvé has pointed out, the law of profit has nothing to with the action of a few big capitalists or multinationals and getting the world we want does not mean ridding ourselves of fat cigar smokers wearing top hats at horse races. What matters is not the individual profits made by capitalists, but the constraint, the orientation, imposed upon production and society by this system which dictates how to work and what to consume. The whole demagogy about rich and poor and 'big' and 'small' merely confuses the issue.

The abolition of capitalism does not mean taking money from the rich, nor revolutionaries distributing it to the poor, but the suppression of the totality of monetary relations.[36]



VI. The Present Situation



The supposed triumph of the 'global economy' seems to have turned out to be rather a hollow victory. It seems that struggle is once again resurgent after at least a decade of relative dormancy. Behind the talk of 'monetary instability', 'bad loans and trading practices' and warnings by financiers such as George Soros about the dangerous fragility of the financial system lies the reality that the ultimate source of the present crisis is not transgressions and mistakes by bankers and speculators but the reduction of profits by class struggle. The Zapatista uprising in 1994 that threw Mexico and NAFTA into crisis, the general strike in France in December 1995 which blocked planned social welfare cuts and austerity measures, and the South Korean workers' season of general strikes from December 1996 to March 1997 that sparked off the Asian crisis and ended the myth of the 'tiger economies' and the boundless profits to be made in 'emerging markets' are just a few examples.

What does this all mean for the future? Has capitalism bitten off more than it can chew in its attempt to *fully* subjugate the vast majority of the world's population to the rule of money?

The virtual collapse of the Russian economy and the financial meltdown in the Far East have shown how rapidly the system can plunge into crisis. If the latest resurgence in struggle in various forms turns into a concerted global offensive, then the abandonment of social democracy and the subsequent lack of any means to accommodate working class needs may prove to have been an error on the part of the ruling class. The contemporary weakness of the old social democratic forms of mediation such as the unions opens the possibility for struggle outside and against their malign influence. In this context it is possible to see a certain awareness amongst capitalists of a possible future need to re-incorporate elements of 'social justice' into the system in order to contain class struggle—a point alluded to by George Soros when he warned that "the uninhibited pursuit of self-interest [which is] not tempered by the recognition of common interest" will spell disaster for the system.[37]

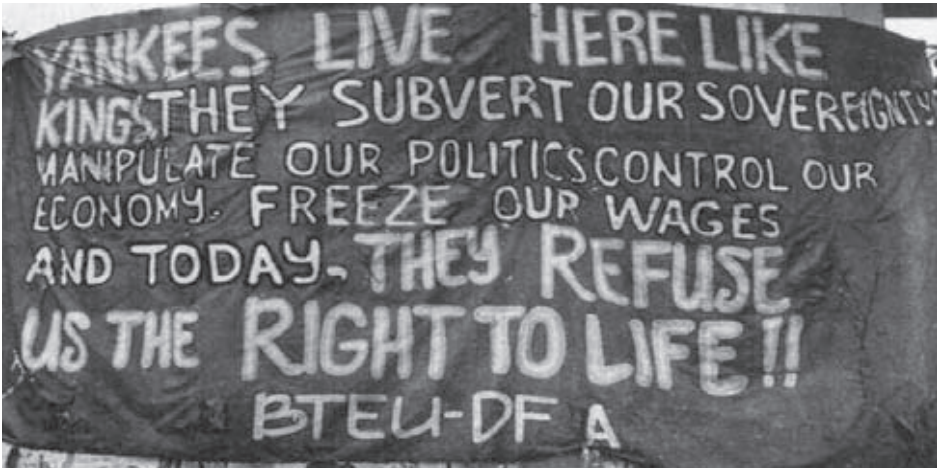
Set against the background of a rising tide of nationalism and racism (some of which is directed against globalisation), our struggles have to be international and internationa*list*, recognising both national states and capital—in whatever form—as our enemy. After the next stock market crash, it is entirely possible that opportunist politicians will start coming out against globalisation and de-regulated markets, with the effect of co-opting and neutralising those radical movements which also situate themselves against it. What we are struggling for is not a return to some form of global social democratic consensus, a redistribution of wealth or a "sustainable and participatory civil society without borders."[38] It is questionable whether permanent reforms are any longer possible—let alone desirable. The only option now left available to us is the complete abolition of capitalist social relations.

Notes

1. The Russian revolution, despite being called 'communist', turned out to be anything but. Instead of developing in an anti-capitalist direction, it was defeated by the emergence of a new set of rulers who preserved all the essential aspects of capitalist society, e.g. wage labour, money and capital accumulation (in an inferior form) and ruthlessly crushed any attempts to do away with them. The Kronstadt mutineers for example were told by Trotsky that unless they resumed work immediately they would be "shot down like partridges." They held out with sadly predictable consequences. The new state was based on a class compromise of guaranteed employment, not having to work too hard, but also little in the shops. It could be summed up as: 'you pretend to pay us—we pretend to work.'
2. "The struggle of powers constituted for the management of the same socio-economic system is disseminated as the official contradiction, but it is in fact part of the real unity—on a world scale as well as within every nation." Debord—*Society of the Spectacle* (London, Black and Red, 1983), thesis No. 56
3. Burnham—'Capital, Crisis and the International State System', in *Global Capital, National State and the Politics of Money*, Werner Bonefeld and John Holloway (Eds.) (London, 1996), p. 106
4. *Aufheben* No.7, p. 14
5. Burnham—*The Political Economy of Post-War Reconstruction* (London, 1990), p. 100. Quoting Gifford, advisor to the US Department of Commerce.
6. Bonefeld—Monetarism and Crisis, in Bonefeld /Holloway (1996), p. 35



7. See *Do or Die* No.6, p. 9-10
8. *Aufheben* No.7, p. 20
9. *Aufheben* No.4, p. 25
10. See: Address to Revolutionaries of Algeria and of All Countries (p. 148) and: The Class Struggles in Algeria (p.160) in *Situationist International Anthology*, edited by Ken Knabb (California, 1981). The SI's view of workers' self-management as revolutionary is questionable, but they are interesting and useful texts nonetheless.
11. See Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith (Eds.)—*The Case Against the Global Economy* (San Francisco, Sierra Club Books, 1996) or David Korten—*When Corporations Rule the World* (1995)
12. Holloway—The Rise and Fall of Keynesianism, in Bonefeld/Holloway (1996), p. 31
13. Gilles Dauvé and François Martin—*The Eclipse and Re-Emergence of the Communist Movement* (Antagonism Press, 1997), p. 10
14. Dauvé/Martin (1997), p. 10
15. Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. This was essentially a cartel of the major oil producers, upon whom many industrialised countries were (and mostly still are) dependent, if they don't have domestic oil supplies.
16. *Aufheben* No.1, p. 22
17. Cleaver—Notes on the Origin of the Debt Crisis, in *Midnight Notes* No.10, p. 21
18. *Aufheben* No.1, p. 22
19. Bonefeld/Holloway—Conclusion, in Bonefeld/Holloway (1996)
20. This was first introduced in California in the mid-1990s. It means a person's third conviction of any sort carries a mandatory 25 year sentence! Jack Straw's next move?
21. See Susan George—*A Fate Worse Than Debt* (New York, 1988) for a leftist analysis.
22. For a brief but good analysis of Agenda 21 in relation to this see 'Agenda 21 Exposed', a pamphlet published in Brighton in 1995 (?)
23. Federici—The Debt Crisis, Africa and the New Enclosures, in *Midnight Notes* No.10, p. 10
24. *Midnight Notes* No.12, p. 3
25. Federici—*Midnight Notes* No.10, p. 17. See this article for further examples of resistance in the 1980s.
26. Dauvé/Martin (1997), p. 11
27. *Midnight Notes* No.12, p. 2
28. De Angelis—The Autonomy of the Economy and Globalisation, in *Common Sense* No.21 (1997), p. 43
29. *The Economist* (1987: 67), quoted in De Angelis (1997), p. 50
30. Burnham—Globalisation: states, markets and class relations, in *Historical Materialism* No.2, (London, 1997), p. 150
31. Burnham—Capital, Crisis and the International State System, in Bonefeld/Holloway (1996), p. 105
32. Burnham (1997), p. 151
33. This is a long standing strategy of nation states which can be seen as early as the 1920s with the return to the Gold Standard with its associated claims of 'automatic regulation'.
34. For examples see any issue of *Corporate Watch* or the 'Resist Corporate Rule!' pamphlet produced by A SEED or any number of SchNEWS issues (e.g. No.141, 161, 187 etc.)
35. 'Resist Corporate Rule!' (A SEED, 1998), p. 8-9
36. Dauvé/Martin (1997), p. 24-5
37. Quoted in *Midnight Notes* No.12, p. 1
38. See: Mexico is Not Only Chiapas, Nor is the Rebellion in Chiapas Merely a Mexican Affair, in *Common Sense* No.22, p. 33. This is also a good, if possibly controversial analysis of the situation in Mexico, including a useful historical background.
39. Leroy Thompson—*Ragged War: The Story of Unconventional and Counter-Revolutionary Warfare* (London, Arms and Armour, 1994), pp. 33-8, 101; Tariq Ali and Susan Watkins—*1968: Marching in the Streets* (London, Bloomsbury, 1998), p. 89; Nick Yapp—*Camera in Conflict* (Köln, Könemann, 1996), p. 124, 148-150; 'Mau Mau will sue Britain for human rights abuses', *The Guardian*, Thursday April 29, 1999
40. Tariq Ali and Susan Watkins—*1968: Marching in the Streets* (London, Bloomsbury, 1998), pp. 70-71; 'Occupy, Resist, Produce' in *Do or Die* no. 7, pp. 88-96
41. *Aufheben* No.5 (1996)


YANKEES LIVE HERE LIKE
KINGS THEY SUBVERT OUR SOVEREIGNTY
MANIPULATE OUR POLITICS CONTROL OUR
ECONOMY. FREEZE OUR WAGES
AND TODAY. THEY REFUSE
US THE RIGHT TO LIFE !!
BTEU-DF A

Animal Antics
Beasts Go Ballistic!

'**A cop in charge** of mounted officers had his £18,000 car trampled at a Middlesborough game - by a spooked police horse.' *Daily Mirror, 29/1/98.*

The whole of the country's benefit system is under threat today from rabbits. The animals have been undermining the Benefits Office's Central Benefits Record Office in Clevedon, and chewing through the wires. Pest control have been called in. Workers will stage a protest if an attempt is made to kill the animals. *Radio 4 News, 23/1/98.*

'The grey squirrels frequently remove their place of residence, and it not unoften happens that not one can be seen one winter where they were in multitudes the year before; they go in large bodies, and when they want to cross a lake or river they seize a piece of the bark of a birch or lime, and drawing it to the edge of the water, got upon it, and trust themselves to the hazard of the wind and waves, erecting their tails to serve the purpose of sails; they sometimes form a fleet of three or four thousand, and if the wind proves too strong, a general shipwreck ensues ... but if the winds are favourable they are certain to make their desired port.' *The Squirrel Hunters of Ohio, or, Glimpses of Pioneer Life, N.E. Jones (1898), quoted in The Squirrel Tale No.4, June 1997.*

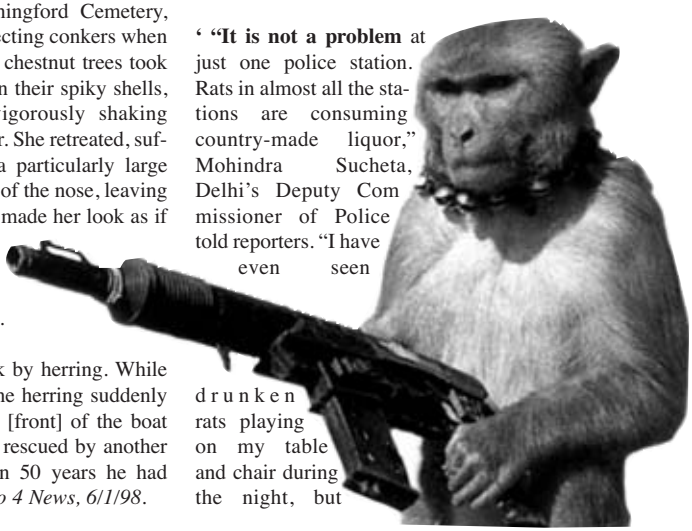
'Fortean Times reader Penny Boot wrote in with a story about how her friend Diane was beaten up by a horde of angry squirrels in Chingford Cemetery, north-east London. She was collecting conkers when a pack of squirrels in one of the chestnut trees took to hurling horse chestnuts, still in their spiky shells, at her. They progressed to vigorously shaking branches to make more fall on her. She retreated, suffering eye-watering pain after a particularly large chestnut struck her on the bridge of the nose, leaving her with a massive bruise which made her look as if she'd been in a punch-up.'
Letter to Fortean Times 100, in The Fortean Times Book of Exploding Pigs (1997), p.31/2.

A trawler off Norway was sunk by herring. While the catch was being hauled in, the herring suddenly dived for the bottom, lifting the [front] of the boat out of the water. The crew were rescued by another trawler. The captain said that in 50 years he had never seen anything like it. *Radio 4 News, 6/1/98.*

Oslo, Norway - 'A harpooned whale fighting for its life rammed the Norwegian boat that shot it, breaking the vessel's mast and hurling two crewmen into the icy waters. The whale escaped, but it was unclear if it survived, the Oslo newspaper Verdens Gang reported Tuesday. The two crewmen, one of whom suffered cracked ribs, were rescued. According to the paper, the whaling boat, the Bolga, was off Norway's northern tip on Monday when it harpooned a minke whale, which can grow up to 30 foot in length. The whale then rammed the 53 foot long wooden boat. The two crewmen, who had been spotting whales from the crow's nest near the top of the mast, were thrown into the ocean, about 425 miles north of the Arctic Circle.'
Associated Press, 2/6/98.

'Ceylon: Deadly cobras are besieging a house in the village of Warakapola, 50 miles from Colombo. The owner had previously beaten a cobra lurking outside his door, but failed to kill it. The reptile slithered off into the jungle. According to Ceylon folklore cobras will always seek revenge, and soon afterwards four took up positions around the house.

The family was forced to leave and employ a snake charmer to rid them of the visitors. He succeeded in catching only two. Hardly had the owner moved back to his home when four cobras appeared and took up siege positions once more.'
Sunday Express, 30//7/72.



' **"It is not a problem** at just one police station. Rats in almost all the stations are consuming country-made liquor," Mohindra Sucheta, Delhi's Deputy Commissioner of Police told reporters. "I have even seen drunken rats playing on my table and chair during the night, but



could not do anything." Speaking in Jafarpur Kalan Police Station, Commissioner Sucheta elaborated on the problem. "In the old days, people kept their illicit booze in bottles, but recently they began using plastic pouches, which are much cheaper. When we confiscate it, we store it in the station, but rats and mice can easily tear the pouches open and drink the contents. The results are disgusting. Tipsy rodents are absolutely fearless, and they ignore all attempts by the police to drive them away. In some cases, the creatures become addicted, and turn violent and go on a biting spree when they find no booze. Here at Jafarpur Kalan, we decided to combat the menace by enlisting a cat, and setting it loose on the rats. At first this plan succeeded, because the rats were too drunk to resist, but lately the cat has begun eating the rodents and becomes drunk himself. After a while, he just staggers about, unable to deal with the remaining vermin. It is getting out of hand. I am considering resignation."' *Gulf Times 24/12/97, in Private Eye No. 942, 23/1/98.*

NOT an Animal Antic: 'The full title of this [nature] reserve - Ravenglass Dunes and Gullery - is now a sad irony, for although the dunes are still a distinguishing feature, the gullery is not. In 1985 the birds decided that the level of radioactive pollution from nearby Sellafield had reached unacceptable levels, and the huge colony of black-headed gull and the four species of breeding tern - sandwich, common, arctic and little - all departed.' *Wild Britain, Douglas Botting, (1992), p.87/8.* [This story lends weight to the persistent rumours that Sellafield experienced a major leak not long before the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, and used that incident to conceal the contamination resulting from its own operations.]

'The district forester at Atherton Tableland, Cairns, Australia, was recently on his way home when he rounded a bend to see a car pulled up in the middle of the road. He stopped, and was confronted by an enraged driver. "That ... that thing there! That's what did it," shouted the driver, pointing up the road. It emerged that the car had encountered a 2-metre-tall cassowary standing in the middle of the road. After admiring the bird for some time, the driver tried edging forward. The bird stood its ground, so the driver blew the horn. The cassowary strongly objected to this and landed a kick that pushed the car's radiator back onto the fan, cutting a hole in it. The victorious cassowary strutted majestically up the road, while coolant from the damaged radiator drained away onto the tarmac. Birds one, cars nil.' *New Scientist, 13/6/98.*

'I thought you might be interested to hear about how animals in Japan are exploiting a technical loophole that allows non-human entities to start legal actions. [Bloody liberals!] An increasing number of species and natural phenomena are suing developers and the Japanese government for environmental damage. The 1995 ground-breaking case was brought by the endangered Amami rabbit supported by 67 volunteer lawyers, against two destructive golf courses. This has inspired bean geese further north to demand the cessation of a Tokyo ring road construction project on the grounds that it would destroy their winter feeding grounds. Kawasaki City is currently defending itself against foxes and a coalition of invertebrates made homeless by green-space destruction. And Hirofumi Yamashita, whose ongoing campaign to re-flood the Isahaya tidal flats earned him this year's Goldman 500 environmental prize, is sharing the stand with waders, fiddler crabs and the Sensui Sea.' *Letter to Positive [bleeurgh] News No.17, Autumn 1998.*

'Monkeys drove officials out of the Public Works Department office in Tezpur, North-Eastern Assam, in December 1991, and spent 25 minutes destroying







"That dog's worrying the sheep again"

official documents. [Sound familiar?!] Police were summoned, but made no attempt to intervene - the holiness factor [i.e. veneration for the Hindu monkey god Hanuman] saved them again.'
D.Post 10/12/91, in Fortean Times No.64, August, 1992.

'Chimpanzees at a wild animal park in Narbonne, southern France attacked a noisy construction crew that woke them up, mauling one worker so badly he needed 30 stitches in his face and neck. Another worker escaped by jumping into a pond ... The work crew had been fixing the ceiling of an empty animal shelter early Tuesday morning when it inadvertently woke up the chimpanzees, who were in a nearby shelter, officials said. One of the chimps broke through a window, and seven other animals followed behind. The chimps fell upon the workers, ripping open one man's cheek and neck ... The chimps then charged the park's office building, breaking some windows. Five employees in the building hid in the walk-in freezer for an hour until firefighters arrived.'
Associated Press 18/3/98

'Indian officials preparing for parliamentary elections have had their efforts halted by hordes of monkeys, which have destroyed equipment in the election office and intimidated the staff. Delhi's chief electoral officer, T.T. Joseph, said the roving simians had ripped the curtains off polling booths and pushed some officials into a corner. "We are apprehensive that they will damage valuable election material, such as electoral rolls, paper and stamps." A private security firm has been hired to protect the staff and to explore ways of getting rid of the marauders safely. The agency is toying with the idea of using sprays to immobilise the monkeys, then using airguns to scare them away.'
Observer 31/3/96.

'M. Camille Spiess records in the French 'Revue Scientifique' [that] ... At the foot of the Jura, in the canton of Vaud, there lives a farmer who raises edible snails (Helix pomatia). He has as many as 50,000 of them at one time, in an enclosure surrounded by a wooden fence about 2 feet high. To prevent the escape of the molluscs the top of the fence is covered with a board, the edge of which is armed sharp metallic points. Lately the snails have discovered the means to surmount this barrier. A number if them climbed the fence until they reached the top, and then, forming a sort of ladder, those behind passed over the shells of the others in front, and so all but one got safely over the top without being impaled on the metal points. "This simple story proves," says M. Spiess, "that the vineyard snail is not without cunning; his behaviour in this case gives evidence of a reasoning faculty such as we have never before encountered in his actions." One must go very low down the animal scale to reach the last trace of thought and will.'
Daily Telegraph, October 14th 1902.

'Our flock of sheep are quite content to stay in the field in which they are enclosed—except for two ewes, and their lambs. No matter how well we think they are fenced in these two always manage to get out into forbidden pastures. As my husband was yet again herding them up, a neighbour told him how he had watched their "break out". They had wandered all round the fence until they came to a weak spot. One ewe then pushed her head through but got stuck half-way. Sizing up the situation the other ewe then rushed at her pal from behind and "butted" her good and hard. She shot through the fence like a rocket—and the other followed through with her lambs. Who says sheep don't have brains?"
Letter to Sunday Express, 6/6/82.

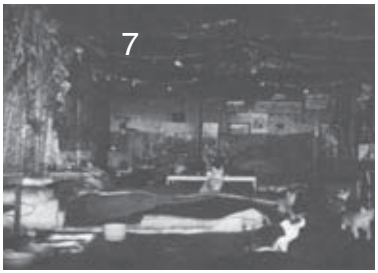
Big shout going out to: The Duchess, the Virtual Primitivist, the Pulse Thief and the Cliffhanging Organic Hicks.

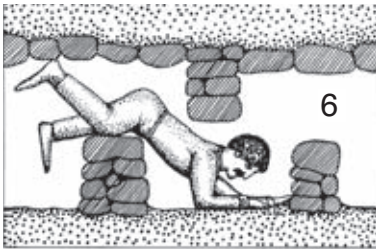






Tunnels of the World







The Mother

by Duong Huong Ly, Vietnam

When she dug the tunnels,
her hair was still brown.
Today her head is as white as snow.
Under the reach of the guns she digs
and digs.
At night the cries of the partridge
record the past.
Twenty years,
allways the land is at war.
The partridge in the night calls out
the love of the native land.
The mother,
she digs her galleries, defenses.
Protecting each step of her children.
Immeasurable is our native land.
The Enemy
must drive his probes everywhere.
Your unfathomable entrails, Mother,
Hide whole divisions under this
land.
The dark tunnels make their own
light.
The Yankees have captured her.
Under the vengeful blows she says
not a word.
They open their eyes wide
but are blind.
Cruelly beaten the mother collapses.
Her body is no more than injuries
and wounds.
Her white hair is like snow.
Night after night the noise of picks
shakes the bosom of the earth.
Columns, divisions, rise up from it.
The enemy,
seized by panic, sees only
hostile positions around him.
Immeasurable is our native land.
Your entrails,
Mother, are unfathomable.

Left: A homeless Canadian finds solace hidden underground in a bunker in the forest.

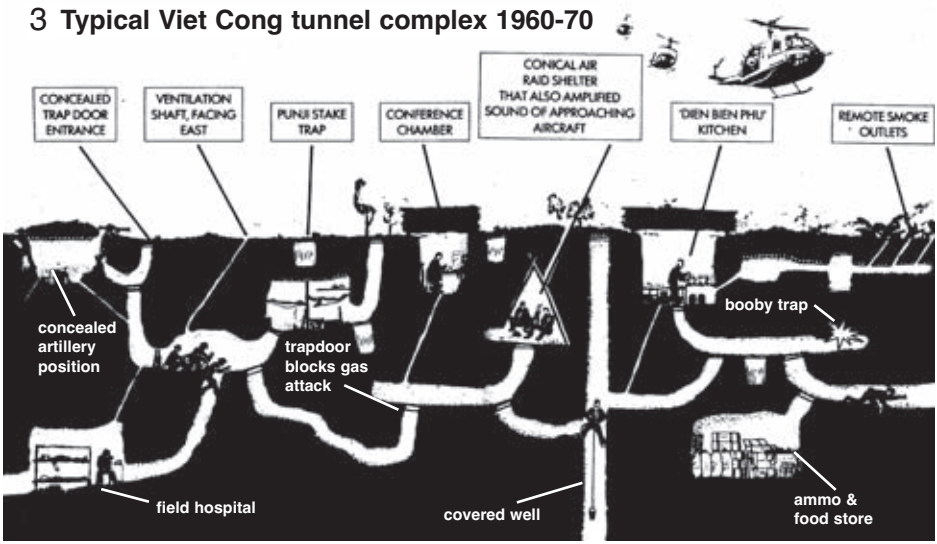
Since we started digging tunnel defences at the Fairmile and Trollheim (1) anti-road camps a few years ago, they have evolved into one of our most effective tactics. This spring at the Crystal Palace eviction (p. 189) they lengthened the eviction from 2 to 19 days, holding down hundreds of security and police, costing thousands. Digging tunnels is a labour of love and a life changing experience. Deep in the soil you can almost hear the pulsating heart of the earth. Recently at Ashton Court (p.148) the digging has been sped up thanks to pneumatic drills (2)—no trowels for us anymore—but still an hour under ground can feel like a day. Our tactics link us to other struggles in the past. To *go underground* is to leave the surface world and take up the secret resistance. Often in history this has been no mere metaphor. The key to the success of the Vietnamese peoples in fighting America was their 150 plus miles of tunnels. These housed hospitals, kitchens, military workshops, printing presses (3) and allowed covert movement around a devastated landscape. While the napalm burned the forest above the resistance below flourished. The Americans were left baffled (4). The Eritreans too took up the underground world as their own. (see box on opposite page). Tunnels have always been a place of refuge. In Turkey in Capa Doccia there is an entire underground town 100 metres down. It was used in the 14th and 15th Centuries to hide from the

John Pilger, (in his book *Heroes*), describes visiting the Eritreans during their struggle against first US then USSR backed Ethiopian regimes. *'The shock upon reaching Eritrea was the illusion that there were no people. Then, out of the ground they came, flashing torches, embracing the drivers. A generator somewhere in the scrub thudded into life... Spokes of light picked up vegetation that had been neatly singed. Napalm had been dropped here that morning... This was a nation of the night. The guerrillas carried out their ambushes in the early hours and retrieved their dead and wounded before the planes came at first light. Children went to school* [often housed in caves] *in the early evening and farmers worked in their fields by moonlight. In the north, an astonishing, complete town had been built underground. At the end of tunnels and mineshafts were factories and foundries, insulated by Ethiopian parachutes and powered by captured Birmingham-made generators... In the 'gun factory', weapons of every nationality, from Kalashnikov rifles to huge artillery pieces, were stripped, studied and duplicated... In the 'metal shop', an entire Soviet MiG-21 bomber, which had crash landed, had been recycled into guns, buckets, ovens, kitchen utensils, ploughs, hoes, X-ray equipment and machine tools... In the 'woodwork factory' school desks were laid out with rows of crutches and artificial limbs.'* The field hospitals had to tend their injured in *'wards in dank crumbling tunnels.' (5)*





Mongul hoards—housing a staggering 100,000. During the destruction of the Paris Commune in 1871 many revolutionaries escaped death through the sewers. As well as places of refuge and resistance tunnels also are amazing places to live. Our ancestors often lived underground either in naturally occurring tunnels or self dug pits. The Satarchae, the indigenous of the Crimea, lived in them, while Xenophon noted that the Armenians also lived in well like homes. Eskimos and the Hopi also. As recently as the 14th Century whole trogladite cultures existed on the edges of civilisation in the Hebridean islands of Lewis, Harris and Uist—some with highly developed defences(6). It was these cultures that became the basis for the gnomes of our myths. Derbyshire saw the last trog village at Buxton. One French visitor reported, *'I looked in vain for the habitations of so many labourers families without being able to see so much as a cottage when at length I discoverd the whole tribe, like so many moles, had formed their residences underground'* . Today thousands of homeless live under New York—in a labrynth of metro, utilitie and sewer tunnels (7). One of them caught the magic of tunnels thus: *'It seeps through your ears and your skin. It's like a hug with nothing to hold you, an understanding. It's like when the stars fill your eyes with their light, and they fill your emptiness. The same connection.'* Tunnels are a great tactics and amazing, almost magical, places.



Going Underground...
Some Thoughts On Tunnelling As A Tactic



Two years on from when it was first used as a defensive tool at the anti-A30 road camps in Devon (see 'Farewell Fairmile—Road Raging in the South West' in *Do or Die* No. 6, p. 48 and the *Earth First! Action Update* No. 36/Feb 97 for some reports and analysis of this campaign), the tunnel has become a cornerstone of site-based direct action—as much a part of the scenery as tree-houses and lock-ons. Tunnels have certainly done great things for our ability to resist evictions for longer periods of time, but there are widespread concerns about tunnels in terms of tactics, the way they are seized upon by the media, and about where we are going with them—both as an idea and a tool.

So why did this use of tunnels develop, and what have they done to take site-based resistance forward? My view is that the initial enthusiasm was for something new, radical and—as much as anything—something physically demanding into which site occupants could direct their anxiety, frustration and need to 'do something'. Tunnelling was not something that required skill or knowledge, as with some tree work, just physical energy, a tolerance of enclosed spaces, and a certain bloody-minded determination.

By the summer of 1995 digger-diving and blockading had been effectively curtailed by the Criminal Justice Act (CJA). This law, passed in the Autumn of 1994, criminalised a whole range of direct action activities—such as disrupting work—that had previously been legal. I feel the gap this left was replaced with a drive for the height advantage; such as the scaffold tower at Claremont Road (resistance to the construction of the M11 link road in East London) and the treehouses at Stanworth Valley (direct action camp against the building of the M65 in Lancashire). Tensions between protesters and bailiffs were rising, and it seemed as if the risks and levels of antagonism might carry on escalating until something horrendous happened. To me it seemed that whilst with tunnelling the personal risks were greater, here was a chance to re-set the agenda. I had high hopes for it as a bringer of calm—all you had to do (after the months of digging and construction) was sit, wait, read a book and eat your stash of food. State of the art non-violent resistance!

The first eviction of an occupied tunnel was at the Trollheim anti-A30 camp in January 1997, and it was



nothing like this at all. The bailiffs were heavy-handed and oblivious to safety concerns as they sledgehammered at structural supports and doors. One person who was locked on had a rope tied to his foot and was winched until he had to release because of the pain. The eviction lasted less than a day.

Eleven days later, and a few hundred metres away, the approach at the Fairmile camp was very different. Bailiffs and police arrived in the evening, secured the tunnel entrance, and waited until the morning, when a new lot of bailiffs (the mysterious 'Men in Black') appeared for the first time. They went about evicting the tunnel very slowly and carefully, building their own shoring as they went, talking to the occupants, and allowing them to communicate with others outside for a few days. The eviction took a week until the last person emerged voluntarily. In terms of a site eviction the tunnel could hardly have been more effective. It prevented the use of machinery (cherry pickers) and tree felling, and bought time so everyone could focus on what was actually occurring. This succeeded beyond anyone's expectations.

After the Fairmile camp eviction, one tunneller was seized upon and hounded by the media; portrayed as 'spokesperson' and a 'representative' of the movement, dressed in suits for newspaper photo shoots and appeared in a game show. This brought to light some of the drawbacks of tunnelling as a frontline tactic. (For a more detailed account see 'Personality Politics—The Spectacularisation of Fairmile' in *Do or Die* No. 7, p. 35) Tunnels are efficient; a couple of people barricaded underground will have a large impact. But this brings up issues of how to get more people involved in taking direct action, as well as the problems of domination of the movement by 'elites'. Tunnelling is an exclusive activity, in which most visitors to direct action sites will only be in a position to support. The 'eco-warrior' myth is taken to new heights by the use of tunnels and this perceived 'elite' is often seen as a barrier to wider public involvement in direct action. It also potentially leads to the celebrity-style focus on individuals that nobody, or the movement, needs.

Another reason for not unquestioningly embracing tunnelling as a tactic is that it can epitomise the defensive mentality which has developed since the introduction of the CJA. This is not just a cheap stab at the role of sites in direct action, as I recognise that we cannot always be pro-active and that there are times when sites do need defensive action. The problem is that sites have become almost institutionalised in their format—we turn up, stick up treehouses, dig tunnels and then wait to be evicted. In the past we have been effective by constantly evolving new tactics, keeping ahead of the opposition. If we sit back on our laurels and assume that these tactics are all we need to win a campaign, or at least satisfy ourselves that we have done our best to prevent destruction, then we will increasingly be disappointed. Bailiffs have developed ways of dealing with people in trees, and if we're not intelligent in our use of tunnels then they'll develop ways of dealing with them as well.

We've got tunnels, they're being used and they are a good tactic. However, we need to stay one step ahead of the state. One possible way forward might be to use the space and time created by an extended eviction period to try and mobilise the often considerable amount of local support into taking more accessible forms of direct action; office occupations, security and police blockades, site invasions, or phone and fax blockades, for example. That way people can become empowered and involved in the process, as well as making evictions more effective.

For details of an excellent guide to tunnelling, including the sorts of things you need to think about if you are digging a tunnel, see the review of the pamphlet *Tunnelling—A Beginners Guide* on page 317 of this issue.



Revenge Is A Dish Best Served Cold

The 'Men in Black' tunnellers used in many evictions are hired from: Specialist Rescue International, 128 Station Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1ET, UK. Telephone: 01737 244652. It also trades from: PO Box 266, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 1GA, UK.

Leave it to Beaver!
Rodents on the Rebound

Hot on the hooves of "In Tusks We Trust" (see *DoD* No. 7, p.9) comes evidence of beavers escaping from captivity and living successfully in the wild in Britain. Along with escapes into Loch Lomond and in Essex, the two most significant incidents so far have been in Ashdown Forest (East Sussex/Kent) and on the River Axe in Somerset. One of the two males that escaped in Ashdown Forest in Spring 1998 is still at large, and has established a bankside lodge on a lake system in the upper catchment of the Medway. It has been felling trees and building up a large food store of branches that resembles a huge swan's nest. There are no plans to recapture it at present—most people don't even realise it is there! There are conflicting stories about the Somerset colony, but all agree that two beavers from a local wildlife park settled on backwaters of the River Axe in 1969. According to some local sources they have obviously bred well, with 8 or 9 animals present up to at least Summer 1995, and they have even been constructing dams!

Unfortunately, however, it should be pointed out that all of these examples are Canadian beavers. It is feared that such escapes might prejudice any future reintroduction of European beavers to Britain by outcompeting them, as has happened with the release of both species in Finland.

It looked as if we could be on the verge of a historic breakthrough, following Scottish Natural Heritage's Summer 1998 public consultation over whether to reintroduce the beaver to Scotland. 60% of respondents were in favour—perhaps our countryside might once again enjoy the huge ecological benefits the beaver brings (see "No Evolution Without Revolution", *Do or Die* No 6, p.38), after a gap of 400 years. Might this also pave the way for an ambitious rebuilding of Britain's severely impoverished fauna through further mammal reintroductions?

But no, this is Scottish Natural Heritage we're talking about here—the notorious lapdog of the big Scottish landowners and their feudal status quo. In this case, "interest groups[ie. forestry and fisheries] have expressed concerns". Never mind that beaver reintroductions are now standard practice in Europe; or that there's reams of evidence demonstrating that they have minimal impact on such "interests"—indeed, that they massively enhance river environments. So, while we will almost certainly get an initial reintroduction scheme, probably with a population from Norway, SNH are desperate to placate the groundless worries of the special interests. Hence it



will be a "very small" pilot project, it won't start for at least two or three years, and will be "studied to the nth degree", dragging on for years—presumably with no guarantee of a full-blown programme at the end of it, if the lairds are still terrified of rampaging furry rodents with fat tails. While careful planning and sensible protocols are necessary—badly planned programmes elsewhere in Europe have caused problems for the beavers themselves—SNH's approach is feeble and overcautious. One can only hope the Norwegian beavers show the same initiative as their Canadian cousins: breaking out and disappearing as soon as they cross the North Sea.

There are exciting plans afoot to set up an interpretive centre for the beaver in Britain, highlighting its long and significant role in the past and its inspiring potential for the future. The people behind the centre already have one pair of European beavers and plan to bring more over in 2000 (from Scandinavia or Poland), with a view to establishing a breeding group for eventual release. Beavers' activities (such as tree-felling, dam-building, 'canal' construction, etc.) are a potent force for the natural disturbance and succession processes that are missing in our landscape. The ultimate intention is to take advantage of these effects, placing the beavers on nature reserves and other sites.

Contact: (Donations appreciated!)
Derek Gow
Wildwood Centre, Wealden Forest Park
Herne Common
Kent CT6 7LQ (Tel: 01227 712111.)

Pirate Utopias
Under the Banner of King Death



from Our Own Correspondent

"In an honest Service, there is thin Commons, low Wages, and hard Labour; in this, Plenty and Satiety, Pleasure and Ease, Liberty and Power; and who would not ballance Creditor on this Side, when all the Hazard that is run for it, at worst, is only a sower Look or two at choaking. No, a merry Life and a short one shall be my Motto"—Pirate Captain Bartholomew Roberts.[1]

During the 'Golden Age' of piracy in the 17th and 18th centuries, crews of early proletarian rebels, dropouts from civilization, plundered the lucrative shipping lanes between Europe and America. They operated from land enclaves, free ports; 'pirate utopias' located on islands and coastlines as yet beyond the reach of civilization. From these mini-anarchies—'temporary autonomous zones'—they launched raiding parties so successful that they created an imperial crisis, attacking British trade with the colonies, and crippling the emerging system of global exploitation, slavery and colonialism.[2]

We can easily imagine the attraction of life as a sea-rover, answerable to no-one. Euro-American society of the 17th and 18th centuries was one of emergent capitalism, war, slavery, land enclosures and clearances; starvation and poverty side-by-side with unimaginable wealth. The Church dominated all aspects of life and women had few options beyond marital slavery. You could be press-ganged into the navy and endure conditions far worse than those experienced on board a pirate ship: "Conditions for ordinary seamen were both harsh and dangerous—and the pay was poor. Punishments available to the ship's officers included manacling, flogging and keel-hauling—the victim being pulled by means of a rope under the hull of the ship from one side to the other. Keel-hauling was a punishment which often proved fatal."[3] As Dr. Johnson famously observed: "no man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for being in a ship is being in jail with the chance of being drowned… A man in jail has more room, better food, and commonly better company."[4]

In opposition to this, pirates created a world of their own making, where they had "the choice in themselves"—a world of solidarity and fraternity, where they shared the risks and the gains of life at sea, made decisions collectively and seized their life for themselves in the present, denying its use to the merchants as a tool for the accumulation of dead property. Indeed, Lord Vaughan, Governor of



Jamaica, wrote: "These Indyes are so Vast and Rich, And this kind of rapine so sweet, that it is one of the hardest things in the World to draw those from it which have used it for so long."[5]

The Rise of Piracy

The era of Euro-American piracy is ushered in by the discovery of the New World and the enormous empire seized by the Spanish in the Americas. New technologies allowed long sea voyages to be made with regularity and accuracy, and the new empires that emerged were not based so much on control of the land as control of the seas. The Spanish were the world superpower of the 16th century, but did not go unchallenged for long; the French, Dutch and English all struggled to overtake the Spanish in the scramble for empire. In their quest to do so they were not above using piracy to attack the hated Spanish and fill their coffers with the vast wealth the Spanish had plundered from the Native Americans. In wartime this raiding would be legitimised as legal privateering but the rest of the time it was simply piracy with state-sponsorship (or at least toleration and encouragement). Over the course of the 17th century these embryonic empires finally overtook the Spanish and established themselves. With the new technologies shipping was no longer just used for luxury goods but became the basis of an international trading network essential to the origin and growth of capitalism. The massive expansion of sea-borne trade in this period necessarily also created a large population of seafarers—a new class of wage-workers that had not previously existed. For many of them piracy seemed an attractive alternative to the harsh realities of the merchant service or the navy.

But as the new empires—especially the British Empire—matured, attitudes to piracy changed: "The roistering buccaneer did not suit the hard-headed merchants and imperial bureaucrats, whose musty world of balance sheets and reports came into violent conflict with that of the pirates." The ruling class recognised that stable, orderly, regular trade served the interests of a mature imperial power far better than piracy. So piracy was forced to evolve in the late 17th and early 18th century. Pirates were no longer state-sponsored gentleman-adventurers like Sir Francis Drake but dropout wage slaves, mutineers, a multi-ethnic melting pot of rebellious proles. Where there had once been a blurring of the edges between legitimate commercial activity and piracy, now pirates found they had few of their old friends left and were increasingly regarded as "Brutes, and Beasts of Prey." As mainstream society rejected the pirates, they likewise became increasingly antagonistic in their rejection of it. From this point onwards the only pirates were those who explicitly rejected the state and its laws and declared themselves in open war against it. Pirates were driven further away from the centres of power as the American colonies, originally beyond state control and relatively autonomous, were brought into the mainstream of imperial trade and governance. There developed a deadly spiral of increasing violence as state attacks were met with revenge from the pirates leading to greater state terror.[6]

"a dunghill wheron England doth cast forth its rubbish"

The Caribbean islands in the second half of the 17th century were a melting pot of rebellious and pauperised immigrants from across the world. There were thousands of deported Irish, Liverpool beggars, Royalist prisoners from Scotland, pirates caught on the English high seas, highwaymen caught on the Scottish borders, exiled Huguenots and Frenchmen, outlawed religious dissenters and the captured prisoners of various uprisings and plots against the King.



The proto-anarchist revolutionary movements of the Civil War of the 1640s had been suppressed and defeated by the time of the dawn of the great age of piracy in the late 17th century but there is good evidence to show that some of the Diggers, Ranters, Muggletonians, Fifth Monarchy Men etc. fled to the Americas and the Caribbean where they inspired or joined these insurrectionary pirate crews. Indeed, a group of pirates settled in Madagascar at a place they had "given the name of Ranter Bay."[7] After the defeat of the Levellers in 1649, John Lilburne offered to lead his followers to the West Indies, if the government would foot the bill. It also seems that the Ranters and Diggers lasted longer in the Americas than in Britain—as late as the 1690s there were reported to be Ranters in Long Island. This isn't surprising really as the New World territories were used by Britain as penal colonies for its discontented and rebellious poor. In 1655 Barbados was described as "a dunghill wheron England doth cast forth its rubbish." Among these undesirables there would have been numbers of radicals—those who had provided the spark for the revolution of 1640. "Perrot, the bearded ranter who refused to doff his hat to the Almighty, ended up in Barbadoes," as did many others such as the Ranter intellectual Joseph Salmon. That the Caribbean had become a haven for radicals did not go unnoticed: in 1656 Samuel Highland advised Parliament not to sentence the Quaker heretic James Nayler to transportation lest he infect other settlers. It was clear at this time that the new British colonies to the west were seen as a haven of relative religious and political liberty; that much further beyond the grasp of law and authority.[8]

Before European merchants discovered the African slave trade and the commercial possibilities of shipping Africans to the Caribbean, thousands of poor and working class Europeans were shipped to the new colonies as indentured servants—effectively a slave trade of its own. The only difference between the trade in indentured servants and the African slave trade was that in theory the slavery of these immigrants was not considered eternal and hereditary. However, many were tricked and their contracts extended indefinitely so they never won their freedom. Slaves, a lifetime investment, were often treated better than the indentured servants.[9]

However, the masters had great difficulty holding on to their servants who tended to go native and abscond to the freedom of the myriad islands of the Antilles, or to isolated bits of coastline or jungle. Here they often formed little self-governing bands or tribes of dropouts and runaways, in many ways mimicking the native peoples before them. These men—sailors and soldiers, slaves and indentured servants, formed the basis for the Caribbean piracy that emerged in the 17th century—maintaining their egalitarian tribal structure even when at sea. As their numbers grew and more men flocked to the red flag, their attacks on the Spanish became more audacious. After a raid they would make for a city like Port Royale in Jamaica, to spend all their money in one great binge of whoring, gambling and drinking before returning to their hunter-gatherer existence on out of the way islands.[10]

There were also of course up to 80,000 black slaves working on the plantations who were prone to frequent and bloody revolts, as well as the last few remaining indigenous Indian inhabitants of the islands. In 1649 a slave rebellion on Barbados coincided with a white servants' uprising. In 1655, following a common pattern, the Irish joined with the blacks in revolt. There were similar rebellions in Bermuda, St. Christopher and Montserrat, whilst in Jamaica transported Monmouthite rebels united with 'maroon' Indians in revolt. This hodge-podge of the dispossessed were described in 1665 as "convict gaol birds or riotous persons, rotten before they are sent forth, and at best idle and only fit for the mines." To which a lady colonist of Antigua added "they be all a company of sodomists." This was the seething multi-racial hotbed of anger and class tension into which our transported or voluntarily exiled Ranters, Diggers and Levellers would have arrived and out of which the great age of Euro-American piracy took shape with the emergence of the buccaneers in the Caribbean around the middle of the 17th century.[11]

Arrgh, Jim Lad!

The overwhelming majority of pirates were merchant seamen who elected to join the pirates when their ships were captured, although a small number were mutineers who had collectively seized their ship. "According to Patrick Pringle's *Jolly Roger,* pirate recruitment was most successful among the unemployed, escaped bondsmen, and transported criminals. The high seas made for an instantaneous levelling of class inequalities."

Many pirates displayed a fine sense of class consciousness; for example, a pirate named Captain Bellamy made this speech to the captain of a merchant vessel he had just taken as a prize. The captain of the merchant vessel had just declined an invitation to join the pirate crew:



> "I am sorry they won't let you have your Sloop again, for I scorn to do any one a Mischief, when it is not for my Advantage; damn the Sloop, we must sink her, and she might be of Use to you. Tho', damn ye, you are a sneaking Puppy, and so are all those who will submit to be governed by Laws which rich Men have made for their own Security, for the cowardly Whelps have not the Courage otherwise to defend what they get by their Knavery; but damn ye altogether: Damn them for a Pack of crafty Rascals, and you, who serve them, for a Parcel of hen-hearted Numskuls. They villify us, the Scoundrels do, when there is only this Difference, they rob the Poor under the Cover of Law, forsooth, and we plunder the Rich under the Protection of our own Courage; had you not better make One of us, than sneak after the Arses of those Villains for Employment?"

When the captain replied that his conscience would not let him break the laws of God and man, the pirate Bellamy continued:

> "You are a devilish Conscience Rascal, damn ye, I am a free Prince, and I have as much Authority to make War on the whole World, as he who has a hundred Sail of Ships at Sea, and an Army of 100,000 Men in the Field; and this my Conscience tells me; but there is no arguing with such sniveling Puppies, who allow Superiors to kick them about Deck at Pleasure."[12]

Piracy was one strategy in an early cycle of Atlantic class struggle. Seamen also used mutiny and desertion and other tactics in order to survive and to resist their lot. Pirates were perhaps the most international and militant section of the proto-proletariat constituted by 17th and 18th century sailors. There were, for example, some hardcore trouble-makers like Edward Buckmaster, a sailor who joined Kidd's crew in 1696, who had been arrested and jailed a number of times for agitation and rioting, or Robert Culliford, who repeatedly led mutinies, seizing the ship he was serving on and turning pirate.[13]

During wartime, due to the demands of the navy, there was a great shortage of skilled maritime labour and seamen could command relatively high wages. The end of war, especially Queen Anne's War, which ended in 1713, cast vast numbers of naval seamen into unemployment and caused a huge slump in wages. 40,000 men found themselves without work at the end of the war—roaming the streets of ports like Bristol, Portsmouth and New York. In wartime privateering provided the opportunity for a relative degree of freedom and a chance at wealth. The end of war meant the end of privateering too, and these unemployed ex-privateers only added to the huge labour surplus. Queen Anne's War had lasted 11 years and in 1713 many sailors must have known little else but warfare and the plundering of ships. It was commonly observed that on the cessation of war privateers turned pirate. The combination of thousands of men trained and experienced in the capture and plundering of ships suddenly finding themselves unemployed and having to compete harder and harder for less and less wages was explosive—for many piracy must have been one of the few alternatives to starvation.[14]

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity

Having escaped the tyranny of discipline aboard merchant vessels the most striking thing about the organisation of pirate crews was their anti-authoritarian nature. Each crew functioned under the terms of written articles, agreed by the whole crew and signed by each member. The articles of Bartholomew Roberts' crew begin:

> "Every Man has a Vote in Affairs of Moment; has equal Title to the fresh Provisions, or strong Liquors, at any Time seized, and may use them at Pleasure, unless a Scarcity make it necessary, for the Good of all, to vote a Retrenchment."[15]

Euro-American pirate crews really formed one community, with a common set of customs shared across the various ships. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity thrived at sea over a hundred years before the French Revolution. The authorities were often shocked by their libertarian tendencies; the Dutch Governor of Mauritius met a pirate crew and commented: "Every man had as much say as the captain and each man carried his own weapons in his blanket." This was profoundly threatening to the order of European society, where firearms were restricted to the upper classes, and provided a stark contrast to merchant ships where anything that could be used as a weapon was kept under lock and key, and to the navy where the primary purpose of the marines stationed on naval vessels was to keep the sailors in their place.[16]

Pirate ships operated on a 'No Prey, No Pay' basis, but when a vessel was captured the booty was divided up by a share system. This sort of share system was common in mediaeval shipping, but had been phased out as shipping became a capitalist enterprise and sailors wage labourers. It still existed in privateering and whaling but pirates developed it into its



most egalitarian form—there were no shares for owners or investors or merchants, there was no elaborate hierarchy of wage differentiation—everyone got an equal share of the booty and the captain usually only 1 or 1 1/2 share. The wreck of Sam Bellamy's pirate ship the *Whydah,* which was discovered in 1984, provides good evidence of this—among the artefacts recovered was rare West African gold Akan jewellery which "had been hacked apart with clear knife marks, which suggested that there had been an attempt to divide it equally."[17]

The harshness of life at sea made mutual aid into a simple survival tactic. The natural solidarity of fellow tars was carried over into pirate organisation. Pirates often went into 'consortship' with one another, where if one died the other got his property. Pirate articles also commonly included a form of mutual aid where injured shipmates unable to participate in the fighting would receive their share as a pension. Pirates took this sort of solidarity very seriously—at least one pirate crew compensated their wounded only to discover they had nothing left. From the articles of Bartholomew Roberts' crew: "If… any Man should lose a Limb, or become a Cripple in their Service, he was to have 800 Dollars, out of the publick Stock, and for lesser Hurts, proportionably." And from those of George Lowther's crew: "He that shall have the Misfortune to lose a Limb, in Time of Engagement, shall have the Sum of one hundred and fifty Pounds Sterling, and remain with the Company as long as he shall think fit."[18]

Pirate captains were elected and could be de-elected at any time for abuse of their authority. The captain enjoyed no special privileges: He "or any other Officer is allowed no more [food] than another man, nay, the Captain cannot keep his Cabbin to himself." Captains were deposed for cowardice, cruelty and revealingly, for refusing "to take and plunder English Vessels"—the pirates had turned their backs on the state and its laws and no lingering feelings of patriotism were to be allowed. The captain only had right of command in the heat of battle, otherwise all decisions were made by the whole ship's company. This radical democracy was not necessarily very efficient; often pirate ships tended to wander rather aimlessly as the crew changed its mind.[19]

The original buccaneers had called themselves the 'brethren of the coast'—an apt term as pirates swapped ships, met up at *rendez-vous* points, joined together with other crews for combined raids and met up with old ship mates. Although it might seem surprising that over the whole expanse of the world's oceans the pirates kept in touch and met up with each other, they continually returned to the various 'free ports' where they were welcomed by black market traders who would buy their goods. Pirate crews recognised each other, didn't attack each other and often worked together in large fleets. For example in 1695 the crews of Captains Avery, Faro, Want, Maze, Tew and Wake all met up for a combined raid on the annual Muslim pilgrim fleet to Mecca, the six ships containing at least 500 men. They also met up and had parties together; like the "saturnalia" when the crews of Blackbeard and Charles Vane joined forces on North Carolina's Ocracoke Island in 1718 (see picture on page 71). There is even evidence that there was a unique pirate language, which is a real sign the pirates were evolving their own distinct culture. Philip Ashton, who spent sixteen months among



The crew of Thomas Anstis ridicule the law by holding a mock trial. The judge, using an old tarpaulin as a robe and a mop-end as a wig, sits in a mangrove tree and declares: "I'll have you know, Raskal, we don't sit here to hear Reason—we go according to Law."



pirates in 1722-3, reported that one of his captors "according to the Pirates usual Custom, and *in their proper Dialect*, asked me, If I would sign their Articles". There is also a hilarious account of how a pirate captive "sav'd his life [by] meer Dint of Cursing and Damning"—suggesting that one feature of this pirate language was the liberal use of blasphemy and swearing. Through splitting and coalescing and men jumping from ship to ship a great continuity existed amongst the various pirate crews, sharing the same cultures and customs and over the course of time developing a specifically 'pirate consciousness.' The prospect that this pirate community might take a more permanent form was a threat to the authorities who feared that they might set up "a Commonwealth" in uninhabited regions, where "no Power in those Parts of the World could have been able to dispute it with them."[20]

Revenge

One particularly important part of what we might call the 'pirate consciousness' was revenge upon the captains and masters who had previously exploited them. The pirate Howell Davis stated: "their reasons for going a pirating were to revenge themselves on base Merchants and cruel commanders of Ships." On capturing a merchantman pirates would commonly administer the 'Distribution of Justice', "enquiring into the Manner of the Commander's Behaviour to their Men, and those, against whom Complaint was made" were "whipp'd and pickled." Interestingly, one of the favourite torments inflicted upon captured captains was the 'Sweat'—a word meaning to drive hard or to overwork—in which the offender was made to run round and round the mizzenmast between decks to the tune of a merry jig while he was encouraged to go faster by the surrounding pirates jabbing his backside with "Points of Swords, Penknives, Compasses, Forks &c." It seems the pirates were determined to give the master a taste of his own medicine—creating a literally vicious circle or treadmill reminiscent of the seaman's labouring life. The most militant of these sea-borne righters-of-wrong has to be Philip Lyne, who when apprehended in 1726 confessed he "had killed 37 Masters of Vessels."[21]

Radical historian Marcus Rediker has uncovered interesting evidence of pirates' concern with retribution in the names of their ships—the largest single group of names are the ones involving revenge, for example Blackbeard's ship the *Queen Anne's Revenge* or John Cole's wonderfully named *New York Revenge's Revenge*. Merchant Captain Thomas Checkley got it just right when he described the pirates who captured his ship as pretending "to be Robbin Hoods Men." There is further evidence for this in the name of another ship—the *Little John* belonging to pirate John Ward. Peter Lamborn Wilson says: "[this] offers us a precious insight into his ideas and his image of himself: clearly he considered himself a kind of Robin Hood of the seas. We have some evidence he gave to the poor, and he was clearly determined to steal from the rich."[22]

The response of the state to these merry men of the seven seas was brutal—the crime of piracy carried the death sentence. The early years of the 18th century saw "royal officials and pirates [locked] into a system of reciprocal terror" as pirates became more antagonistic to mainstream society and the authorities ever more determined to hunt them down. Rumours that pirates who had taken advantage of the 1698 royal pardon were on surrendering denied the benefits of the pardon



'The Pirates Striking off the arm of Captain Babcock': Babcock's ship was intercepted en route from Bombay, some of the crew joined the pirates and turned against their own captain—apparently cutting his arm off.



only increased mistrust and antagonism; the pirates resolved "no longer to attend to any offers of forgiveness but in case of attack, to defend themselves on their faithless countrymen who may fall into their hands." In 1722 Captain Luke Knott was granted £230 for the loss of his career, after turning over 8 pirates, "his being obliged to quit the Merchant service, the Pirates threatening to Torture him to death if ever he should fall into their hands." It was by no means an empty threat—in 1720 pirates of the crew of Bartholomew Roberts "openly and in the daytime burnt and destroyed… vessels in the Road of Basseterre [St. Kitts] and had the audaciousness to insult H.M. Fort," avenging the execution of "their comrades at Nevis". Roberts then sent word to the governor that "they would Come and Burn the Town [Sandy Point] about his Ears for hanging the Pyrates there." Roberts even had his own pirate flag made showing him standing on two skulls labelled ABH and AMH—'A Barbadian's Head' and 'A Martinican's Head'—later that same year he gave substance to his vendetta against the two islands by hanging the governor of Martinique from a yardarm. As bounties were offered for the capture of pirates, the pirates responded by offering rewards for certain officials. And when pirates were captured or executed, other pirate crews often revenged their brethren, attacking the town that condemned them, or the shipping of that port. This sort of solidarity shows that there had developed a real pirate community, and that those sailing under 'the banner of King Death' no longer thought of themselves as English or Dutch or French but as *pirates*.[23]

Piracy and Slavery

The Golden Age of piracy was also the hey-day of the Atlantic slave trade. The relationship between piracy and the slave trade is complex and ambiguous. Some pirates participated in the slave trade and shared their contemporaries' attitude to Africans as commodities for exchange.

However, not all pirates participated in the slave trade. Indeed large numbers of pirates were ex-slaves; there was a much higher proportion of blacks on pirate ships than on merchant or naval vessels, and only rarely did the observers who noted their presence refer to them as 'slaves'. Most of these black pirates would have been runaway slaves, either joining with the pirates on the course of the voyage from Africa, deserting from the plantation, or sent as slaves to work on board ship. Some may have been free men, like the "free Negro" seaman from



A group of pirates, among them Gibbs and Wansley, burying their treasure on Barron Island. This engraving is unusual for the rare depiction of an African-American pirate, although in fact there were many of them.

Deptford who in 1721 led "a Mutiney that we had too many Officers, and that the work was too hard, and what not." Seafaring in general offered more autonomy to blacks than life on the plantation, but piracy in particular, could—although it was a risk—offer one of the few chances at freedom for an African in the 18th century Atlantic. For example, a quarter of the two-hundred strong crew of Captain Bellamy's ship the *Whydah* were black, and eyewitness accounts of the sinking of the pirate vessel off Wellfleet, Massachusetts in 1717 report that many of the corpses washed up were black. Pirate historian Kenneth Kinkor argues that although the *Whydah* was originally a slave ship, the blacks on board at the time of the sinking were members of the crew, not slaves. Partially because pirates, along with other tars, "entertain'd so contemptible a Notion of Landsmen," a black man who knew the ropes was more likely to win respect than a landsman who didn't. Kinkor notes: "Pirates judged Africans more on the basis of their language and sailing skills—in other words, on their level of cultural attainment—than on their race."[24]

Black pirates would often lead the boarding party to capture a prize. The pirate ship the *Morning Star* had "a Negro Cook doubly arm'd" in the boarding party and more than half of Edward Condent's boarding party on the *Dragon* were black. Some black pirates became quartermasters or captains. For example, in 1699, when Captain Kidd dropped anchor in New York, two sloops were there to meet



him, one of whose "Mate was a little black man… who, as it was said, had been formerly Captain Kidd's Quarter Master."[25]

In the 17th century blacks found on pirate ships were not tried with the other pirates because it was assumed they were slaves, but by the 18th century they were being executed alongside their white 'brethren'. Still the most likely fate for a black pirate, if he was captured, was to be sold into slavery, whether he was a freeman or not. When Blackbeard was captured by the Royal Navy in 1718, five of his eighteen man crew were black and according to the Governor's Council of Virginia the five blacks were "equally concerned with the rest of the Crew in the same Acts of Piracy." A "resolute Fellow, a Negroe" named Caesar was caught just as he was about to blow up the whole ship rather than be captured and most likely returned to slavery.[26]

In 1715 the ruling Council of the Colony of Virginia worried about the connections between the "Ravage of Pyrates" and "an Insurrection of the Negroes." They were right to be concerned. By 1716 the slaves of Antigua had grown "very impudent and insulting" and reportedly many of them "went off to join those pirates who did not seem too concerned about color differences." These connections were trans-Atlantic; stretching from the heart of Empire in London, to the slave colonies in the Americas and the 'Slave Coast' of Africa. In the early 1720s a gang of pirates settled in West Africa, joining and intermixing with the Kru—a West African people from what is now Sierra Leone and Liberia, renowned both for their seamanship in their long canoes and when enslaved for their leadership of slave revolts. The pirates were probably members of Bartholomew Roberts' crew who had fled into the woods when attacked by the Navy in 1722. This alliance is not so unusual when you consider that of the 157 men who didn't escape and were either captured or killed on board Roberts' ship, 45 of them were black—probably neither slaves nor pirates but "Black saylors, commonly known by the name of gremetoes"—independent African mariners primarily from the Sierra Leone region, who would have joined the pirates "for a small demand of wages."[27]

We can see the way these connections were spread and the how the pirates' legacy was disseminated even after their defeat in the fate of some of those captured on Roberts' pirate ship. "Negroes" from his crew grew mutinous over the poor conditions and "thin Commons" they received from the Navy. "Many of them" had "lived a long time" in the "pyratical Way", which obviously for them had meant better food and more freedom.[28]

Going Native

Lionel Wafer was a French surgeon who joined the buccaneer crews in the Caribbean in 1677. While returning from a voyage to the East Indies he met with an accident and was forced to recuperate in an Indian village, eventually adopting Indian customs. This is his description of the return of some English sailors to the village:

> "I sat awhile, cringing upon my hams among the Indians, after their fashion, painted as they were, and all naked but only about the waist, and with my nose-piece hanging over my mouth. 'Twas the better part of an hour before one of the crew, looking more narrowly upon me, cried out, "Here's our doctor," and immediately all congratulated my arrival among them."[29]

This sort of dropping out and going native was not always accidental. The buccaneers of the Caribbean originally got their name from *boucan*, a practice of smoking meat they had learnt from the native Arawak Indians. The buccaneers were originally land squatters on the large Spanish owned island of Hispaniola (now Haiti and the Dominican Republic)—they turned to piracy following Spanish attempts to oust them. On Hispaniola they followed a way of life essentially identical to the native peoples who had preceded them. This sort of 'marooning life' was very clearly identified with piracy—apart from the buccaneers of Hispaniola and Tortuga the main other group of European dropouts in the New World were the logwood cutters of Bay of Campeche (now Honduras and Belize), a "rude drunken crew" who were considered by most observers to be interchangeable with pirates. They consciously chose a non-accumulative life living in independent communal settlements on the world's periphery.[30]

The pirates' relations with the native peoples they encountered were split. Some pirates would enslave peoples they encountered, make them work, rape the women and steal. But other pirates settled down and intermarried—becoming part of the society. Particularly in Madagascar, the pirates mixing with the native population had produced "a dark Mulatto Race there." Contacts and cultural exchange between pirates, seamen and Africans led to the clear similarities between sea shanties and African songs. In 1743 some seamen were court-martialled for singing a



"negro song". These sort of connections went in both directions and were not as rare as you might imagine. A pirate called William May, stranded on the Madagascan island of Johanna got a shock when he was addressed in fluent English by one of the "negroes". He learned that the man had been taken from the island by an English ship and had lived for a while in Bethnal Green in London, before returning home. His new friend saved him from being captured by the English and taken to Bombay and hanged.[31]

It is a common feature of what you might call 'pirate ideology' that pirates thought of themselves as free kings, as autonomous individual emperors. This was partly to do with the dream of wealth—Henry Avery was idolised for the enormous wealth he plundered; some believed he had set up his own pirate kingdom. Yet there was a pirate who achieved an even more remarkable rags-to-riches story, for he started out as a slave in the French colony of Martinique: Abraham Samuel, "Tolinor Rex", the King of Fort Dauphin. Samuel was a runaway slave who joined the crew of the pirate ship *John and Rebecca,* eventually becoming quartermaster. In 1696 the pirates captured a large and valuable prize and decided to retire and settle down in Madagascar. Samuel ended up in the abandoned French colony of Fort Dauphin where he was identified by a local princess as the child she had borne to a Frenchman during the occupancy of the colony. Samuel suddenly found himself declared heir to the vacant throne of the kingdom. Slavers and merchants flocked to do business with "King Samuel" but he retained sympathies for his pirate comrades, allowing and assisting them to loot the merchants who came to trade with him. There were a number of similar, if less flamboyant, characters in the ports and harbours of Madagascar—pirates or slavers who had become local leaders with private armies of as many as 500 men.[32]

Sex and Drugs and Rock n' Roll

The pirates certainly seem to have had more fun than their poor suffering counterparts on naval or merchant vessels. They sure had some pretty wild parties—in 1669 just off the coast of Hispaniola, some of Henry Morgan's buccaneers blew up their own ship during a particularly riotous party, which like all good pirate celebrations included much drunken firing of the ship's guns. Somehow they set light to the gunpowder in the ship's magazine and the resulting explosion totally destroyed the ship. On some voyages alcohol ran "as freely as ditchwater" and for many tars the promise of unrestricted grog rations had been one of the main reasons behind leaving the merchant service to become a pirate in the first place. However this sometimes backfired—one group of pirates took three days to capture a ship because there were never enough sober men available. Sailors in general loathed a "drink-water" voyage—one reason being that in the tropics the water tended to get things living in it and you had to strain it through your teeth.[33]

No pirate celebration would be complete without music. Pirates were renowned for their love of music and often hired musicians for the duration of a cruise. During the trial of "Black Bart" Bartholomew Roberts' crew in 1722, two men were acquitted as being only musicians. The pirates seem to have employed music in battle, as it was said of one of the men, James White, that his "business as music was upon the poop in time of action."[34]



For some men the freedom that piracy offered from the constrained world they had left behind extended to sexuality. European society of the 17th and 18th centuries was savagely anti-homosexual. The Royal Navy periodically conducted brutal anti-buggery campaigns on ships on which men might be confined together for years. In both the navy and the merchant service it was considered that sexuality was inimical to work



and good order on board ship, as Minister John Flavel wrote of seamen to merchant John Lovering: "The Death of their Lusts, is the most Probable Means to give Life to your Trade." B.R. Burg in *Sodomy and the Pirate Tradition* suggests that the vast majority of pirates were homosexual, and although there isn't really enough evidence to support this, nevertheless to indulge in these things a pirate colony was probably just about the safest place you could be. Some of the early buccaneers of Hispaniola and Tortuga lived in a kind of homosexual union known as *matelotage* (from the French for 'sailor' and possibly the origin of the word 'mate' meaning companion), holding their possessions in common, with the survivor inheriting. Even after women joined the buccaneers, *matelotage* continued with a partner sharing his wife with his *matelot*. Louis Le Golif in his *Memoirs of a Buccaneer* complained about homosexuality on Tortuga, where he had to fight two duels to keep ardent suitors at bay. Eventually the French Governor of Tortuga imported hundreds of prostitutes, hoping thereby to wean the buccaneers away from this practice. The pirate captain Robert Culliford, had a "great consort," John Swann, who lived with him. Some men bought "pretty boys" as companions. On one pirate ship a young man who admitted a homosexual relationship was put in irons and maltreated, but this seems to have been the exception rather than the rule. It is also significant that in no pirate articles are there any rules against homosexuality.[35]

Pirate Women

The freedom of life under the Jolly Roger extended to another perhaps surprising group of sea-robbers: women pirates. Women weren't quite as rare at sea in the 17th and 18th centuries as you might imagine them to have been. There was a fairly well established tradition of women cross-dressing in order to seek their fortune, or to follow husbands or lovers to sea. Of course the only women we know about are the ones that got caught and exposed. Their more successful sisters have sailed off into anonymity. Even so, it would seem that women aboard pirate ships were few. Ironically this may have contributed to the pirates' downfall—they were relatively easy for the state to crush because the pirate community was widely dispersed and inherently fragile; they found it hard to reproduce or replenish their numbers. By comparison, the much longer lived and more successful pirates of the South China Seas were organised in family groups with men, women and children all at sea together—thus there was always a new generation of pirates to hand.[36]

Just as pirates in general defined themselves in opposition to the emerging capitalist social relations of the 17th and 18th centuries, so also some women found in piracy a way to rebel against the emerging gender roles. For example, Charlotte de Berry, born in England in 1636, followed her husband into the navy by dressing as a man. When she was forced aboard an Africa-bound vessel, she led a mutiny against the captain who had assaulted her, cutting off

The Black Flag



"Why is our flag black? Black is a shade of negation. The black flag is the negation of all flags. It is a negation of nationhood which puts the human race against itself and denies the unity of all humankind. Black is a mood of anger and outrage at all the hideous crimes against humanity perpetrated in the name of allegiance to one state or another."[48]

We all know that pirates flew the 'Jolly Roger'—the skull and cross-bones flag. The most likely derivation of the name 'Jolly Roger' is as an Anglicisation of the French *Jolie Rouge*—the red or 'bloody' flag that pirates originally used before the more well-known black. The red flag is widely known as the international symbol of proletarian revolution and revolt and the black flag has historically been the flag of the anarchist movement. (These two colours were most famously combined in the anarcho-communist red and black flags of the Spanish revolution of 1936.)[49]

The earliest definite report of the black flag being flown by anarchists or used in working class revolt is of the famous anarchist Louise Michel leading a crowd of rioting unemployed to ransack bakers' shops with a black flag on March 9th 1883. However there are reports that she had flown a skull and cross-bones flag 12 years earlier in 1871, while leading the women's battalions of the insurrectionary Paris Commune. The Paris Commune even had a daily paper called *Le Pirate*.[50]



his head with a dagger. She then turned pirate and became captain, her ship cruising the African coast capturing gold ships. There were also other less successful women pirates; in Virginia in 1726, the authorities tried Mary Harley (or Harvey) and three men for piracy. The three men were sentenced to hang but Harley was released. Mary's husband Thomas was also involved in the piracy but seems to have escaped capture. Mary and her husband had been transported to the colonies as convicts a year earlier. Three years later in 1729, another deported female convict was on trial for piracy in the colony of Virginia. A gang of six pirates were sentenced to hang, including Mary Crickett (or Crichett), who along with Edmund Williams, the leader of the pirate gang, had been transported to Virginia as a felon in 1728.[37]

However, the women pirates about whom we know the most are Anne Bonny and Mary Read. Mary Read was born as an illegitimate child, and brought up as a little boy by her mother in order to pass her off to her relatives as her legitimate son. She had to be tough to deal with the harsh circumstances of her life and by the time she was a teenager she was already "growing bold and strong." Mary seems to have liked her male identity and enlisted herself as a sailor on a man-of-war and then as an English soldier in the war in Flanders. At the end of the war she joined a Dutch ship bound for the West Indies. When her ship was captured by 'Calico' Jack Rackham's pirate crew, which included Anne Bonny, she decided to throw her lot in with the pirates. She seems to have taken to pirate life and began a new romance with one of the crew. When her lover got into an argument with a fellow pirate and was challenged to settle it in the pirate's customary way "at sword and pistol", Mary saved her lover by picking a fight with the contender, challenging him to a duel two hours before that he was due to fight with her lover and then running him through with her cutlass.[38]

Anne Bonny was born the illegitimate child of a "Maid-Servant" in Ireland and raised in male disguise, her father pretending she was the child of a relative entrusted to his care. He eventually took her to Charleston, South Carolina, where they no longer needed to keep up the pretence. Anne grew up into a "robust" woman of "fierce and couragious temper." Indeed, one time "when a young Fellow would have lain with her against her Will, she beat him so, that he lay ill of it a considerable time." She ran away to the Caribbean where she fell in love with the captain of a pirate crew called 'Calico' Jack Rackham (so-called because of his outlandish and colourful clothing). Anne and 'Calico' Jack, "finding they could not by fair means enjoy each other's Company with Freedom, resolved to run away together, and enjoy it in Spight of all the World." They stole a ship from the harbour and for the next couple of years Bonny was Rackham's shipmate and lover as their crew (which soon also included Mary Read disguised in male clothing, who joined them from a ship they captured) raided shipping in the Caribbean and American coastal waters.[39]

In June 1780 when the prisons of London were broken open and the prisoners freed during the Gordon Riots we find this description: "A giant of a man had been seen riding a cart-horse and waving an immense black and red flag, like the standard bearer of an opposing army." This man's name was James Jackson and he led the masses to destroy London's main prison with a shout of "A-hoy for Newgate!" It would not be reading too much into it to suggest that this "a-hoy!" might indicate Jackson was a sailor—sailors had always been the most militant section of the working class, in which case this black and red flag signalling a call to freedom on the streets of London could easily have direct links to the black and red flags of the Caribbean several years earlier. This thus considerably predates Louise Michel and almost puts us back in the hey-day of the pirates.[51]

The red and black flew again in the Caribbean in 1791. After a huge slave revolt, part of the old pirate stronghold of Hispaniola took instead the Native American name "Haiti" and became the world's first independent black republic. Led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, the rebels defeated the forces of three empires to win their liberty. The red and black flag of Haiti became a banner of freedom to eighteenth and nineteenth century blacks, especially to sailors who would sail to Haiti, become Haitians and then return home flying a red and black flag. American slaves aboard naval and merchant vessels would flee and seek refuge in Haiti.[52]

Of a certain William Davidson, we are informed: "at a demonstration he protected the black flag with skull and cross bones, 'Let us die like Men and not be sold like Slaves,' the flag said." Davidson was a black man born in 1786 and executed in 1820. He was born in Kingston, Jamaica—erstwhile 'wickedest city on the earth' and notorious pirate capital. He spent three years at sea, was a trade unionist, read Tom Paine and may have had some connection to Toussaint L'Ouverture and the revolution in Haiti. He was finally executed on Mayday 1820 with others for being part of the 'Cato Street conspiracy' to assassinate the entire cabinet while they were at dinner. This was intended to lead to attacks on Mansion House and the Bank of England, the seizing of artillery and to give the spark for a revolution in Britain![53]

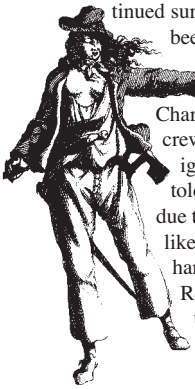
Be Proud to fly the Jolly Roger!



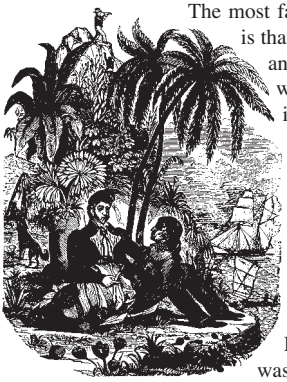
One of the witnesses at their trial, a woman called Dorothy Thomas, who had been taken prisoner by the pirates, said the women "wore Mens Jackets, and long Trousers, and Handkerchiefs tied about their Heads, and that each of them had a Machet[e] and Pistol in their Hands." Despite the fact Read and Bonny were in men's clothing, their prisoner was no fool; she said that "the Reason of her knowing and believing them to be Women was, by the largeness of their Breasts."

Other prisoners taken by the pirates reported that Bonny and Read "were both very profligate, cursing, and swearing much, and very ready and willing to do any Thing on board." Both women appear to have exercised some leadership; for example, they were part of the group designated to board prizes—which was a role reserved for only the most fearless and respected members of the crew. When the pirates "saw any vessel, gave Chase or Attack'd," the pair "wore Men's Cloaths," but at other times, "they wore Women's Cloaths."[40]

Rackham, Bonny and Read were all caught in 1720 by a British navy sloop off Jamaica. The crew were all totally drunk (a common event) and hid in the hold—there was only one other apart from Bonny and Read who was brave enough to fight. In disgust, Mary Read fired a pistol down into the hold "killing one and wounding others." Eighteen members of the crew had already been tried and sentenced to hang by the time the women came to court. Three of them, including Rackham, were later hung in chains at prime locations to act as a moral instruction and "Publick Example" to the seamen who would pass their rotting corpses. However, Mary Read insisted that "Men of Courage"—like herself—did not fear death. Courage was a primary virtue amongst the pirates—it was only courage that ensured their continued survival. 'Calico' Jack Rackham had been promoted from quartermaster to captain when the then current captain, Charles Vane, had been deposed by his crew for cowardice. So it was an ignominious end for Rackham to be told by Anne Bonny before he was due to be hanged that "if he had fought like a Man, he need not have been hang'd like a Dog." Both Bonny and Read escaped execution because they "pleaded their Bellies, being Quick with Child, and pray'd that Execution might be staid."[41]



Misson and Libertalia



The most famous pirate utopia is that of Captain Misson and his pirate crew, who founded their intentional community, their lawless utopia of Libertalia in northern Madagascar in the Eighteenth century.[42]

Misson was French, born in Provence, and it was while in Rome on leave from the French warship Victoire that he lost his faith, disgusted by the decadence of the Papal Court. In Rome he ran into Caraccioli—a "lewd Priest" who over the course of long voyages with little to do but talk, gradually converted Misson and a sizeable portion of the rest of the crew to his brand of atheistic communism:

> "…he fell upon Government, and shew'd, that every Man was born free, and had as much Right to what would support him, as to the Air he respired… that the vast Difference betwixt Man and Man, the one wallowing in Luxury, and the other in the most pinching Necessity, was owing only to Avarice and Ambition on the one Hand, and a pusilanimous Subjection on the other."

Embarking on a career of piracy, the 200 strong crew of the *Victoire* called upon Misson to be their captain. They collectivised the wealth of the ship, deciding "all should be in common." All decisions were to be put to "the Vote of the whole Company." Thus they set out on their new "Life of Liberty." Off the west coast of Africa they captured a Dutch slave ship. The slaves were freed and brought aboard the *Victoire,* Misson declaring that "the Trading for those of our own Species, cou'd never be agreeable to the Eyes of divine Justice: That no Man had Power of Liberty of another" and that "he had not exempted his Neck from the galling Yoak of Slavery, and asserted his own Liberty, to enslave others." At every engagement they added to their numbers with new French, English and Dutch recruits and freed African slaves.

While cruising round the coast of Madagascar, Misson found a perfect bay in an area with fertile

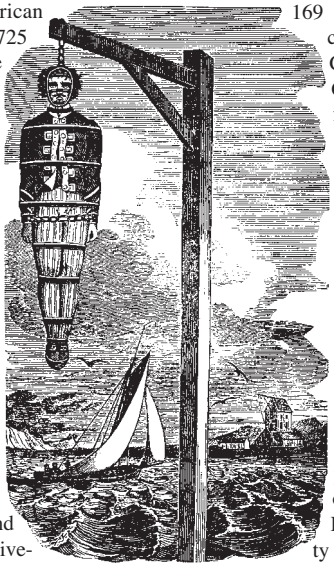


soil, fresh water and friendly natives. Here the pirates built Libertalia, renouncing their titles of English, French, Dutch or African and calling themselves *Liberi*. They created their own language, a polyglot mixture of African languages, combined with French, English, Dutch, Portuguese and native Madagascan. Shortly after the beginning of building work on the colony of Libertalia, the *Victoire* ran into the pirate Thomas Tew, who decided to accompany them back to Libertalia. Such a colony was no new idea to Tew; he had lost his quartermaster and 23 of his crew when they had left to form a settlement further up the Madagascan coast. The *Liberi*—"Enemies to Slavery," aimed to boost their numbers by capturing another slave ship. Off the coast of Angola, Tew's crew took an English slave ship with 240 men, women and children below decks. The African members of the pirate crew discovered many friends and relatives among the enslaved and struck off their fetters and handcuffs, regaling them with the glories of their new life of freedom.

The pirates settled down to become farmers, holding the land in common—"no Hedge bounded any particular Man's Property." Prizes and money taken at sea were "carry'd into the common Treasury, Money being of no Use where every Thing was in common."

The Empire Strikes Back: The End of the Golden Age of Piracy

The Golden Age of Euro-American piracy was roughly from 1650 to 1725 with its peak in about 1720. There were very specific conditions and circumstances that led to this heyday on the high seas. The period opens with the emergence of the buccaneers on the Caribbean islands of Hispaniola and Tortuga. For most of this period piracy was centred around the Caribbean, and with good reason. The Caribbean islands provided innumerable hiding places, secret coves and uncharted islands; places where pirates could take on fresh water and provisions, rest up and lie in wait. The location was perfect; lying just on the route taken by the heavily laden treasure fleets from South America back to Spain and Portugal, the Caribbean was effectively impossible for any navy to police and many islands were unclaimed or uninhabited. All in all it added up to a freebooter's paradise.



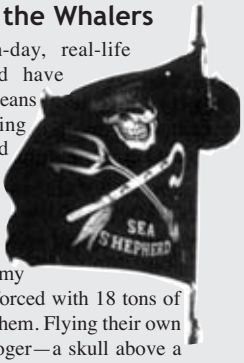
In 1700 a new law was introduced to allow for the swift trial and execution of pirates wherever they may be found. Previously they had to be transported back to London to stand trial and be executed at the low tide mark at Wapping. The 'Act for the More Effectual Suppression of Piracy' also enforced the use of the death penalty and gave rewards for resisting pirate attack, but most importantly, it was not trial by jury but by a special court of naval officers. The famous Captain Kidd was one of the first victims of this new law—indeed the law was partially rushed through specifically so that it could be applied to him. He was hanged at Execution Dock in Wapping and his body was then placed in a gibbet, coated with tar to help preserve it, and hung at Tilbury Point to be a "terror to all that saw it." The blackened and rotting corpse was intended to serve as a very clear reminder to the common seaman of the risks of resisting the disciplines of wage labour.[43]

Kidd's case was unusual in that he was executed in London. After 1700, under the provisions of the new law the war against the pirates would increasingly take place around the peripheries of Empire, and it wouldn't just be one or two corpses that dangled from crosstrees down near the tidemark but sometimes twenty or thirty at a time. In one particularly significant case in 1722 the British Admiralty tried 169 pirates of Bartholomew Roberts' crew and executed 52 of them at Cape Coast Castle on the Guinea Coast. The 72 Africans on board, free or not, were sold into slavery, which perhaps some of them had escaped for a short while.[44]

It was the disappearance of the unique favourable conditions of the Golden Age that ended the reign of the pirates. With the development of capital in the 17th century came the rise of the state, fostered by the imperial wars that wracked the globe from 1688 onwards. The requirements of conducting these vast wars necessitated a huge increase in state power. When, in 1713, the Treaty of Utrecht ended war between the European nations, the state's ability to actually police piracy was mas-



Waging War on the Whalers



Since 1977, modern-day, real-life pirates Sea Shepherd have roamed the world's oceans attacking and sinking whaling vessels and driftnetters. The black ship with a black pirate flag is equipped with spikes for ripping open the sides of enemy vessels and bows reinforced with 18 tons of concrete for ramming them. Flying their own version of the Jolly Roger—a skull above a crossed shepherd's crook and trident—'Neptune's Navy' have engaged in over 20 years of guerrilla war for marine ecology: "Any whaling ship on the ocean is a target for Sea Shepherd."

Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, 3107A Washington Boulevard, Marina del Ray, CA 90292, USA. Tel: +1 (310) 301-7325

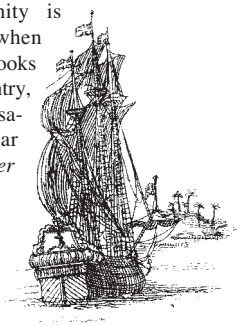
Source: David B. Morris—*Earth Warrior* (Golden, Colorado, Fulcrum, 1995)

sively increased. The end of the war also allowed naval ships to concentrate on hunting down the pirates and granted the British even larger commercial interests in the Caribbean, giving an extra incentive to these efforts. As the new, more powerful state consolidated its monopoly on violence, the colonies were brought into line. The practice of dealing with pirates and investing in pirate voyages had continued in the colonies long after it had become unacceptable at home; it was wiped out by an extension of state power from the mother country to enforce discipline on the colonies. The beginning of the end was marked by ex-buccaneer Sir Henry Morgan's return to Jamaica as Governor with express orders to destroy the pirates. Naval patrols flushed them from their lairs and mass hangings eliminated the leaders. Ultimately the pirates' war on trade had become too successful to be tolerated; the state was fighting to allow commerce to flow unimpeded and capital to accumulate, bringing wealth to the merchants and revenue to the state.[45]

If we want to look for the heirs of the libertarian piracy of the Golden Age we shouldn't necessarily only be looking at more recent pirates, but rather at how piracy fed into the Atlantic class struggle. Just as some of the initial impetus behind the piracy of the 17th and 18th centuries had come from land-based radical movements like the Levellers, the flow of ideas and practices circulated around the Atlantic world, emerging in sometimes surprising places. In 1748 there was a mutiny aboard the *HMS Chesterfield*, near Cape Coast Castle off the west coast of Africa. One of the ringleaders—John Place—had been there before; he was one those captured with Bartholomew Roberts back in 1722. It was "old hands" like John Place who kept alive the pirate tradition and ensured the continuity of ideas and practices. The mutineers hoped pirate-fashion "to settle a colony". The term 'to strike' originated in mutiny, particularly the "Great Mutinies" at Spithead and the Nore in 1797 when sailors would strike their sails to disrupt the ceaseless flow of trade and the state's war machine. These English, Irish and African sailors established their own "council" and "shipboard democracy" and some even talked of settling a "New Colony" in America or Madagascar.[46]

The pirates prospered in a power vacuum, during a period of upheaval and war that allowed them the freedom to live effectively outside the law. With the coming of peace came an extension of control and an end to the possibility of pirate autonomy. This is not so surprising really when we consider that periods of war and turmoil have often allowed for revolutionary experiments, enclaves, communes and anarchies to flourish. From the pirates of the 17th and 18th centuries, to D'Annunzio's piratical Republic of Fiume in the First World War, the Paris Commune in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, The Diggers' land communes in the English Civil War and the Makhnovist peasants in the Ukraine during the Russian Revolution, it is often in interstice and interregnum that experiments in freedom can find space to flower.

"Is this Utopian? A map of the world which does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realisation of Utopias."—Oscar Wilde, *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*[47]





Notes

1. Daniel Defoe (Captain Charles Johnson)—*A General History of the Pyrates*, Edited by Manuel Schonhorn, (London, Dent, 1972), p. 244
2. For example, the East India Company was brought near to collapse by piracy in 1690s. Robert C. Ritchie—*Captain Kidd and the War against the Pirates*, pp. 128-34
3. Larry Law—*Misson and Libertatia*, (London, A Distribution/Dark Star Press, 1991), p. 6
4. Marcus B. Rediker—*Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates and the Anglo- American Maritime World 1700-1750*, p. 258
5. *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 255; *Op. Cit*. 2, p. 29, 142
6. *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 272 n52, 274—"as more pirates were captured and hanged, the greater cruelty was practiced by those who were still alive"; *Op. Cit*. 2, p. 2
7. Marcus B. Rediker—'Libertalia: The Pirate's Utopia' in David Cordingly (ed.)—*Pirates*, p. 126
8. Christopher Hill—'Radical Pirates?' in *Collected Essays,* Vol. 3, pp. 162, 166-9; Peter Lamborn Wilson—'Caliban's Masque: Spiritual Anarchy and the Wild Man in Colonial America', in Sakolsky and Koehnline (eds.)—*Gone to Croatan: The Origins of North American Dropout Culture* (New York/Edinburgh, Autonomedia/AK Press, 1993), p. 107; *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 14-15
9. Jenifer G. Marx—'Brethren of the Coast' in Cordingly (ed.)—*Pirates*, pp. 47, 49-50; *Op. Cit*. 4, pp. 69, 81- 2; *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 65, 211, 226
10. Richard Platt and Tina Chambers (Photographer)—*Pirate* (Eyewitness Books) (London, Dorling Kindersley, 1995), pp. 20, 26-7; *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 22-23
11. Hill—'Radical Pirates?', pp. 169-170
12. *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 258; Hakim Bey—*T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism* (New York, Autonomedia, 1991) pp. 23, 139; *Op. Cit*. 1, p. 587
13. *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 65, 117-8
14. *Ibid*. pp. 42, 234
15. *Op. Cit*. 1, p. 211
16. *Op. Cit*. 2, p. 124
17. Lawrence Osborne—'A Pirate's Progress: How the Maritime Rogue Became a Multicultural Hero' *Lingua Franca* March 1998 <http://www.linguafranca.com/9803/osborne.html> (unpaginated)
18. *Op. Cit*. 2, p. 59, 258 n38; *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 264; *Op. Cit*. 1, pp. 212, 308, 343
19. *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 262
20. *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 87-88, 117; Douglas Botting and the Editors of Time-Life Books—*The Pirates* (Time Life's *The Seafarers* Series) (Amsterdam, Time-Life, 1979), p. 142; *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 278; *Op. Cit*. 1, p. 7
21. Cordingly—*Life Among the Pirates*, p. 271; *Op. Cit*. 2, p. 234; Botting—*The Pirates*, p. 61; *Op. Cit*. 4, pp. 269-272
22. *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 269; Peter Lamborn Wilson—*Pirate Utopias: Moorish Corsairs and European Renegadoes*, p. 57
23. *Op. Cit*. 4, pp. 255, 274, 277; *Op. Cit*. 2, p. 234; Botting—*The Pirates*, pp. 48, 166; Platt and Chambers—*Pirate*, p. 35
24. *Op. Cit*. 7, pp. 133-4; W. Jeffrey Bolster—*Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 12-13; *Op. Cit*. 1, p. 228; *Op. Cit*. 20 (unpaginated)
25. *Op. Cit*. 7, p. 133; Bolster—*Black Jacks*, p. 15
26. *Op. Cit*. 20 (unpaginated); *Op. Cit*. 7, pp. 133-4, 249 n37; Bolster—*Black Jacks*, p. 14; *Op. Cit*. 1, p. 82
27. *Op. Cit*. 7, pp. 134, 249 n42, 250 n44; Bolster—*Black Jacks*, pp. 50-1
28. *Op. Cit*. 7, p. 134; *Op. Cit*. 1, p. 273
29. Lionel Wafer—*Voyage de Mr. Wafer, Ou l'on trouve la description de l'Isthme de l'Amérique* (Publisher not stated, Paris? 1723) <http://www.buccaneer.net/piratebooks.htm>
30. Platt and Chambers—*Pirate*, pp. 26-7; *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 146; Cordingly—*Life Among the Pirates*, p. 7
31. *Op. Cit*. 1, p. 131; *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 86-7, 104, 118
32. *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 84-5
33. *Ibid*. pp. 59, 69, 72-3; Cordingly—*Life Among the Pirates*, p. 64
34. Cordingly—*Life Among the Pirates*, p. 115
35. *Ibid*. pp. 122-5; Marcus B. Rediker—'Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger: The Lives of Anne Bonny and Mary Read, Pirates' in M. Creighton and L. Norling (eds.)—*Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Atlantic Seafaring, 1700-1920* (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 9; *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 123-4; Marx—'Brethren of the Coast', p. 39
36. Rediker—'Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger', pp. 8-11, 233 n26; *Op. Cit*. 1, p. 212; Platt and Chambers—*Pirate*, pp. 32-3, 62; *Op. Cit*. 4, p. 285; Ulrike Klausmann, Marion

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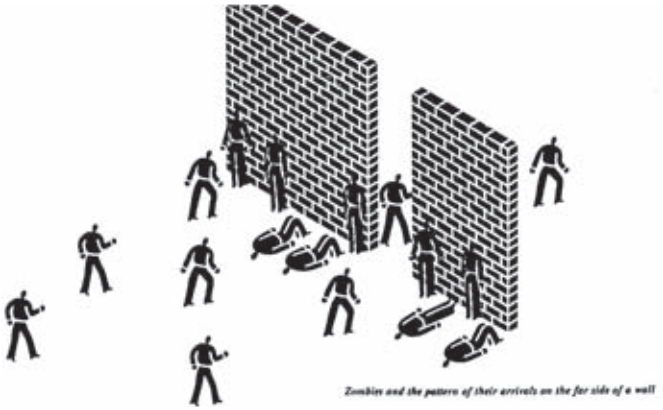
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Meinzerin and Gabriel Kuhn (trans. Nicholas Levis)—*Women Pirates and the Politics of the Jolly Roger*, pp. 36-7

37. Platt and Chambers—*Pirate*, p. 33; Rediker—'Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger', pp. 10, 232-233 n24, n25
38. Rediker—'Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger', pp. 3-5, 8, 13; Platt and Chambers—*Pirate*, pp. 32-3
39. Rediker—'Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger', pp. 5-7, 13-16, 234 n41; Platt and Chambers—*Pirate*, pp. 32-3; *Op. Cit*. 1, pp. 623-6
40. Rediker—'Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger', pp. 7-8
41. *Ibid*. pp. 2-3, 5-7, 13-14; Platt and Chambers—*Pirate*, pp. 32, 35; *Op. Cit*. 1, pp. 158-9
42. The whole of the following narrative is drawn from Captain Charles Johnson's *General History of the Robberies and Murders of the most notorious Pyrates*, published in London in 1728, (Op. Cit. 1, pp. 383-439). Because Johnson's book is the only source for the history of Captain Misson, the story is almost universally asserted to be fictional. However the overall credibility of Johnson's book has been established—it would appear that this is the only fictional episode in an otherwise reliable work of history. The *General History* was published only a very few years after the events it recorded took place, and yet no one at the time denounced the Misson story as fiction. The story of Misson was believed. And it was believed because it was *believable*. There *were* radical, libertarian pirates, and there were pirate settlements on Madagascar—all the elements of the story fit with what we know of pirates. Perhaps the Misson story is a fiction with a solid basis in fact; perhaps like the story of Robin Hood it collects together a wide range of different experiences in one narrative. In either case the story of Libertalia represents the literary expression of the living traditions, practices and dreams of the Atlantic proletariat.

    On the Misson story and the reliability of the *General History* see: Maximillian E. Novak—'Introduction' to Daniel Defoe (Captain Charles Johnson)—'Of Captain Misson' (1728) extract from the *General History*—Augustan Reprint Society, Publication number 87 (W. A. Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles, 1961), pp. i-iii; *Op. Cit*. 3, pp. 6-8; *Op. Cit*. 7, pp. 125-7, 249 n2, n7; Manuel Schonhorn—'Introduction' to *Op. Cit*. 1, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii; Rediker—'Liberty beneath the Jolly Roger', pp. 230-1 n4, n11; Botting—*The Pirates*, pp. 6, 21-22; Cordingly—*Life Among the Pirates*, pp. 10-11, 77
43. *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 153-4, 228, 235; Cordingly —*Life Among the Pirates*, p. 237
44. *Op. Cit*. 2, p. 235; Botting—*The Pirates*, pp. 174-5
45. *Op. Cit*. 2, pp. 7, 128, 138, 147-51; *Op. Cit*. 20 (unpaginated)
46. *Op. Cit*. 7, pp. 137-8
47. *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde* (Glasgow, Harper Collins, 1994), p. 1184
48. Howard J. Ehrlich (ed.)—*Reinventing Anarchy, Again* (Edinburgh, AK Press, 1996), p. 31
49. Cordingly—*Life Among the Pirates*, pp. 2, 138-143: "Red or 'bloody' flags are mentioned as often as black flags until the middle of the eighteenth century"; *Op. Cit*. 2, p. 22; Platt and Chambers—*Pirate*, p. 35
50. Woodcock—*Anarchism: A History of Libertarian Ideas and Movements* (London, Penguin, 1963), p. 284; Jason Wehling—'History of the Black Flag: Why Anarchists fly it. What are its origins?', in *Fifth Estate* (Vol. 32, #1, Summer 1997), p. 31; *Le Pirate: Journal Quotidien* #1-4 (1871) in University of Sussex Commune Collection—continuation of *Le Corsaire*.
51. John Nicholson—*The Great Liberty Riot of 1780* (London, Bozo, 1985), pp. 44-46
52. Bolster—*Black Jacks*, pp. 152-3
53. For more on this check out two excellent pieces by Peter Linebaugh—'Jubilating: Or, How The Atlantic Working Class Used the Biblical Jubilee Against Capitalism, With Some Success' in 'The New Enclosures': *Midnight Notes* #10 (1990), p. 92; and 'All the Atlantic Mountains Shook', in Eley and Hunt (eds.)—*Reviving the English Revolution: Reflections and Elaborations on the work of Christopher Hill* (London, Verso, 1988), p. 214. All you Sussex bioregionalists out there will be thrilled to discover a Brighton connection to this notorious conspiracy—one of the three executed was a Brighton butcher called James Ings (perhaps recruited for his skill with a carving knife?), who said: "I will cut every head off that is in the room and Lord Castlereagh's head and Lord Sidmouth's I will bring away in a bag. For this purpose I will provide two bags." See Rocky Hill—*Underdog Brighton: A Rather Different History of the Town* (Brighton, Iconoclast Press, 1991), pp. 23-4, and John Stanhope—*The Cato Street Conspiracy* (London, Johnathan Cape, 1962), p. 87



Zombies and the pattern of their arrivals on the far side of a wall

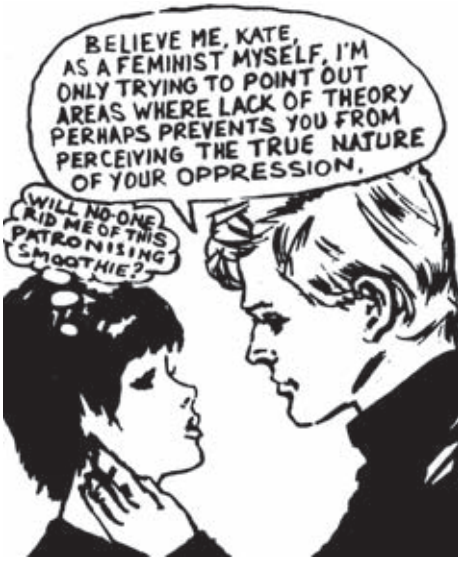
Let Patriarchy Burn!
a feminist rant

"How many articles does it take until men start working on their shit? Aren't you tired of hearing and reading about it? Maybe Smith and Wesson do a better job? At least stop considering yourself revolutionaries. YOU ARE NOT MY COMRADE." - Molly Tov in *Profane Existence*.

So i'm talking to an activist man about misogyny within a particular group and he's telling me i need to get in there and change it from the inside, not attack it from the outside. That sounds like reformism to me. He says no, because in our united fight against capitalism we're on the same side.
But we're not.

Patriarchy is often bandied about as a term to explain men's prejudices or/and behaviour toward women. But just as the behaviour and attitudes of a boss towards a worker is not the intrinsic problem of capitalism but rather an expression of it, so gender relations are some of the symptoms of the cultural, economic, social and ideological system of oppression, exploitation and power—Patriarchy.

An article about patriarchy (which was actually about sexism) on road protest camps appeared in Do or Die No. 7, and outlined some of the ways in which patriarchy shows itself. The list of 'complaints' was referred to as disgruntlement and claimed; "For all men's faults women are still very much respected on site and patriarchy does have its advantages." Patriarchy does have its advantages, but only for those who wish to maintain oppression. Any movement that does not challenge this oppression is not a fight for freedom. This article will examine how the ideology and practices of the radical ecology movement in the UK stunt the development of true resistance.


BELIEVE ME, KATE, AS A FEMINIST MYSELF, I'M ONLY TRYING TO POINT OUT AREAS WHERE LACK OF THEORY PERHAPS PREVENTS YOU FROM PERCEIVING THE TRUE NATURE OF YOUR OPPRESSION.
WILL NO-ONE RID ME OF THIS PATRONISING SMOOTHIE?

Manifestations of Patriarchy In EF!

Patriarchy appears in a number of both obvious and subtle ways in advanced capitalist society. Unequal and unfair distribution of labour, rape and the constant threat of it, objectification of our bodies, women unheard, talked over, burdened with childcare and domestic slavery, depoliticised [their thoughts and actions made personal/emotional rather than political] and deprioritised. But instead of these being challenged in a radical movement like Earth First! they are replicated. As the article 'Patriarchy on Road Protest camps' suggests, gender relations on site range from the uncomfortable, through the intimidating to the ultimately impossible. The division of labour whereby men commit 'heroic' deeds and women do the washing up is petty compared to the tolerated incidences of rape and sexual assault that occur on drunken nights. Aware activists talk angrily about the experiences of sex on site, not being utopian freedoms but a charming variety of sexual coercion of schoolgirls to total irresponsibility around contraceptives resulting in unwanted pregnancies. These power abuses are not confined to sites but also to urban environments. One woman commented:

"When i first came to our anarchist social centre and thought it would be a good idea to get involved, it was this boy's club—there was this one woman who did shifts, but she just came in, cleaned up and served tea, it was the three blokes who'd sit around together, joke, and in this way sort out what's happening with it…it was a real effort on my side to feel responsible and become a part of the decision-making processes."

Not acknowledging women as autonomous political individuals (depoliticisation) seems a common experience in political movements. When talking of the struggle i have found most inspirational, i was dismissed as only being interested because my former male partner was also, as if my political thought process was centred in my cunt. The accusation of being smitten with a single person instead of dedicated to revolution was something many women i spoke to also had encountered.





Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797)
Famous author of what is called the first major feminist text—'Vindication of the Rights of Women' which argues passionately that women should not be contained in the role of domestic slaves and mistresses, and criticizes monarchy, aristocracy and standing armies as well.

The anecdotes of everyday sexisms are too numerous to list, but that they occur continuously and without paradox in the radical eco movement must be examined: these are not one-off, isolated incidents, but part of the patriarchal nature of Earth First! Without an understanding of—and resistance to—the multiple power relations in our society there can be no true social change.

Flawed Philosophies and Failing Philosophers

The media construct of ecowarriors is not far enough removed from the realities to be ironic. One of the ideologies that is central to eco-activism is that of romanticism. Romanticism is a myth of patriarchy that creates opposites such as good/evil, man/woman, active/passive. This is a means of simplifying and justifying differences that are actually constructed. To be pushed into one of these definitions polarises us into restricted behaviour and restricted mindsets, limiting our beings and our potential. For example, the notion of 'defence of the planet' conveniently forgets the fact that we are fighting for ourselves. Instead the earth is the passive beauty, capitalism the evil dragon and we good fellows the noble knights.

Look at me mum, i've smashed the world

Macho posturing can take many forms. From masking up in counter-productive situations, to throwing things without aim and mission, boasting about criminal records—or worse, criminal activities, or being the person down the tunnel the longest. These activities often operate at a level of competitiveness within the network rather than co-operation and suggest that activism is for the adrenaline and the recognition rather than the daily effort toward building mass resistance. Wanting to be seen to engage in heroic or hardcore activity relies on others' failure to do the same, and instead of these activities inspiring others to take action they alienate—hence the problem of some people ("activists") being asked to take action on behalf of other people; e.g.: people being asked to pie someone, or 'save' some land from road building. (Why does everyone need to take action when superman can do it for us?) Rather than using the most effective tactics available, macho activists need the most visual; hanging from harnesses is, in our 'movement', a more popular approach than mass direct action, and media stunts are seen as 'worthwhile' activity despite such an obviously problematic relationship with the media.

Crucifixion is too good for us

The other side of the coin is the concept of activist suffering:—a few suffering for the needs of the



Louise Michel (1830-1904)
A founder of a libertarian school, fighter on the barricades of the Paris Commune of 1871, and never quelled in her 'deeds not words!' style agitation for anarchy, feminism and animal liberation.



masses. Accountable actions fall into this category, as do hunger strikes with unfeasible demands. As most people (in particular those with responsibilities such as children) are not willing to lose their liberty for actions of limited effectiveness. These actions remain the domain of a few who offer up themselves for 'the cause'. As before, these misguided actions mean that most people are excused from taking action (who needs to do anything when jesus will do it for us?) Those who suffer most in society do not fetishise or glamorise suffering. This privileged option of personal sacrifice courts attention sometimes termed 'public awareness' but like macho media stunts does little to forward radical social change.

Alongside an ideology of romantic eco-heroism comes a clear rejection of feminism (and other politics that draw attention to divisions between 'us'). This is of course essential to a polarised vision of the battle. We too are individually and collectively responsible for the shit that goes on, we too are the villains, the wrongdoers, and even 'the enemy'.—e.g. whilst struggling for the destruction of global capitalism we are still creaming off the Third World. Recognising our oppression we must also recognise our positions as oppressors, our privileges. This requires understanding the specific differences of our oppression: we are not equally abused by capitalism, this is dependent on our class, our race, our nationality, our sexuality, and our gender. The radical eco movement is only just beginning to address these issues and still fails to carry a concept of women's specific oppression or women's specific resistance, separate from men's.

Some oppressions are treated with more priority than others: the rape of women (a near universal experience) seems to be of less importance than the rape of the earth. Rape is seen as an individual and personal problem between rapist and victim rather than rooted in our patriarchal system. In the same way the destruction of the planet may be partly carried out by construction companies, but these companies are not the core problem. Again, fights for 'indigenous people's land rights' do not distinguish between men's and women's land rights which are (again, near universally) different. Most 'tribal' societies have indigenous laws which have different access and control of land according to gender.

Similarly, women's resistance is overlooked, made invisible, written out of hystory: from the diggers to the dockers, go directly past the suffragettes, do not collect any credit. Or perhaps worse, women's resistance is only understood as the co-opted part of the movement. Just as mainstream society looks upon Greenpeace as radical ecology, the co-opted liberal end of feminism is falsely viewed as feminism. But feminism is not about whether white middle-class



Voltairine de Cleyre (1866-1912)
As an anarchist, she believed changes in society had to occur in the economic and political spheres, but added the personal and psychological dimensions of life to this—the 'moral revolution'. She educated women to be industrially independent, and maintained independence herself all her life.

western women can wear lipstick or not, it is about poverty and violence and power. The simplifications of the feminist movement, behaving as if all women were equally oppressed and all men were similarly oppressive, are lessons for the radical eco-movement. The feminist movement ate itself by not acknowledging difference—that some women were closer to power than others due to their class or race. This meant class and race struggles were not truly dealt with in the movement and that the mass feminist movement never became resistance for the benefit of most women but only for the privileged few.

An over-simplified vision of how to 'save' the world is not only wrong, it is dangerous. The radical eco-movement will suffer co-option if it is dominated by young white middle-class graduate men putting their concerns first: to be noticed, to be a hero, to set the agenda, to be special. For in the struggle for freedom the needs of the most dominant groups in society should come last. Women's resis-



The First Uprising

by Commandante Insurgente Marcos

In March of 1993 the companeros debated about what would later be the "Revolutionary Laws". Susana was in charge of going around to dozens of communities to speak with groups of women and put together, from her thoughts the "Women's Laws". When the CCRI got together to vote on the laws, each one of the commissions got up: justice, agrarian reform, war taxes, rights and obligations of people in struggle and women. Susana had to read the proposals that she had gotten together from the thoughts of thousands of indigenous women.

She started to read and, as she read on, the assembly of the CCRI became more and more restless. You could hear murmurs and comments. In Chol, Tzotsil, Tojolobal, Mam, Zoque and Spanish. The comments jumped from one side to the other. Susana, undisturbed, charged on against everyone and everything. "We don't want to be forced into marriage with someone we don't want. We want to have the children we want and can take care of. We want the right to hold rank in the community. We want the right to speak up and to be respected. We want the right to study and even be drivers." And she kept going like that until she was done. At the end there was a long silence.

The Women's Laws that Susana had just read meant a true revolution for the Indigenous communities. The women responsible were receiving the translation in their dialects of what Susana had said. The men looked at each other, nervously, restless. All of a sudden all the translations ended almost all at the same time. And in a single movement, the companeras responsible for the laws started to clap and talk among themselves. needless to say the "Women's Laws" were approved unanimously. A Tzetzal responsible for the law commented "The good thing is that my wife doesnít understand Spanish, because otherwise..." An insurgent official who was a woman and a high infantry rank, jumped on him "You're fucked, because we're going to translate it into all the dialects." The companero looked down. The women responsible were singing, the men were scratching their heads.

...That was the truth: the first EZLN uprising was March, 1993, and was led by Zapatista women. There were no casualties, and they won.

tance to patriarchy is not some sub-heading that can be dealt with 'after the revolution'. The global struggle against body mutilation, domestic violence, infanticide, sexual assault, rape, domestication, slavery, dehumanisation, poverty, forced sterilisation and forced reproduction is not nit picking.

Anarcho-misogynists Anonymous… A 12 step plan

These are some ways of challenging our social conditioning by a patriarchal culture. Macho behaviour is not specific to men, although often more common as males have been traditionally encouraged into stereotypical men (meaning aggressive, dominating, active, individualistic etc.) and women encouraged into equally limited and repressive caricatures instead of us all achieving our full potential as human beings.

1. **Women's Space:**Women, spend time in it, especially if you don't understand why it exists. The experiences of women's space are different to mixed space. And let's stop 'discussing' it in mixed groups—women's space is neither requested or demanded, it is taken and the opinions of men are irrelevant.
2. **Skill Sharing:** It is largely a myth. Usually it is about one individual teaching one or many, and obviously gives rise to many problems of hierarchy and patronising behaviour. Lets work on real trading…you show me yours and i'll show you mine.
3. **New Women Being Fuck Fodder:** This is particularly present, or maybe just most visible, on mixed protest camps, although also a problem in women's camps when they are treated like lifestyle cruising grounds, at squat cafes/social centres and in urban groups. Other women can 'buddy up' with women who are new and let them know they are valued as activists. Males can be friendly but not invasive. Everyone can pull up their friends or intervene if somebody is being out of order. Be honest, tell newcomers about problems like this so they don't think they're imagining it, or that this is acceptable behaviour.
4. **Sexual Coercion:** While this is such a common complaint, it is often kept hush hush, people not wanting to rock the boat. As people who value direct action we need to take it—girl guerrilla groups who have issued confrontational warnings or revenge attacks on known bastards have claimed mixed areas as places not to mess with women in. The actions we take against corporate



scum can and should also be taken against raping scum.

5. **Question Everything:** Why do you really want to do that banner drop? Is it the best, most effective attack on this particular target or is it the one that gets you the most credit? If you can't be bothered to go flyposting and engage in sabotage, but you will get nicked for something high profile and dangerous... ask yourself why. Think carefully before every action. Just what and who are you doing this for?
6. **Shut Up:** Meetings are generally dominated by a few mouthy individuals with little particularly constructive, creative or original to say. Recognise that some people are more confident than others talking in meetings. Have go-rounds at the beginning and at the end of meetings and somewhere halfway too. When someone new or someone who doesn't usually speak gets the guts to say something, credit them. Properly facilitated meetings are a great asset to those who don't jump in. And talk to new people or quiet people afterward; tell them you liked what they said.
7. **Wash Up:** It's such a cliché it's almost a joke. But it takes more than soapsuds to sort out the division of labour. On actions do the things you don't usually, offer to do the support work, stay in the office, do leaflet distribution, be—godforbid—anonymous. If it's an action that's public then it doesn't need the trust of an affinity group off to burn something down. Team up with less experienced people—write that leaflet with someone who's never written one before instead of your usual comrade.
8. **Sisterhood:** To misquote one of my male friends—there's no point spelling womyn all funny if you don't do the acts too. Solidarity in sisterhood can be interpreted in 100's of ways, be doing at least some of them.



Although the familiar picture is of a peaceful middle class woman with hat and placard, suffragettes smashed windows and set churches on fire, and many were working class

9. **We Don't Need Another Hero:** Putting ourselves and others in hero-positions fictionalises our activities rather than reaching out to others. Bragging is neither skill sharing nor empowering others to act. Let's get humble because nothing we do is glorious, especially not when it's sensational. The sexy factor of an action isn't the be all and end all and media coverage is generally counter-productive. Get real—seeing a young dreadlocked white boy hanging off a thin rope on the TV does not empower the viewer into thinking they can do the same.
10. **Learn:** Inform yourself of women's resistance, historically and geographically. If you know all about the Spanish revolution but not about 12th century women's rebellion in China widen your reading list.
11. **Abandon Your Privilege:** This is the hard one. First we need to acknowledge and recognise that as first world activists we occupy a global position of privilege. Most of us also have extra power due to our youth, our skin colour, our family class background. When we ignore our own or other's chains they don't just disappear, and when we topple these power relations most of us will get bruised on the way down. Admit we don't get the hardest deal. Listen to others, we might not know the best way. Get criticised, feel uncomfortable, and deal with it.
12. **Unity Against Patriarchy:** While the fight against patriarchy is women's struggle and it is imperative that 'feminist' men do not hijack this struggle, everyone should participate in overthrowing systems of oppression. "Not only because men are capable of its perpetration but because we can be accomplices as well, by engaging in harmful ridicule and by our silence. But the struggle for respect for the specificity of gender can also include us, by acknowledging what we are, what we are not, and above all, what we are capable of becoming." - Commandante Insurgente Marcos.



Women's Liberation

What follows is from an interview conducted by a 'young anarcha-feminist' with an 'older second wave feminist'. It took place over a couple of pleasant afternoons and is an attempt to look into and understand the significance of what was called the 'Women's Liberation Movement' in the 1970s and early '80s.

Tell us a bit about yourself..

I got involved with the Women's Liberation Movement in 1970 while I was a student at university. It was a very big group and we had subgroups and so forth, it was so exciting! When I was trying to look at what I have done over the last nearly 30 years, it seemed to be mainly communication and facilitation. I haven't been out on the streets that much. I've done a lot of work in publishing, and I've organised all sorts of conferences and events. I have done quite a bit of grassroots stuff. I've been very involved with local Women's Centres, and I was involved in the Soho 16 campaign, supporting 16 women who were arrested at a Reclaim the Nights demonstration in Soho in the late '70s.

What would you describe the autonomous Women's Liberation Movement as? What was it made up of?

Thousands and thousands of women! At the last of the national Women's Liberation conferences that we had, held in Birmingham in 1978, there were 3000 women. You can be sure that for every woman who came, there were another 5 who couldn't make it. So there were loads of us! I suppose what we're talking about is the period between 1970 and 1985. We were organised in mostly small groups, some of which had some national co-ordination like around different campaigns, at the socialist-reformist end. I'm not meaning that distinction as a put-down, you just have to think about the different ways that groups organised. On the socialist feminist side, you had the National Abortion Campaign, the Working Women's Charter organising in trade unions, I'm sure there were loads of others but those were two I still have in mind. On the radical feminist side, there were things like 'Women Against Violence Against Women', of course there was the National Women's Aid Federation. The first Women's Liberation refuge was opened in Brixton in 1973. It was clear that it was an excellent idea, because domestic violence was a really huge feminist issue.

Opening up a refuge was taking direct action...

Yes, what happened was that these women I knew opened up a squat in Brixton and then, soon after that, there was a second one and within a very short time there was a National Federation of 10 or 20 Women's Aid refuges, mostly squatted. This is one of the things I had been thinking about, is the perceptions I think younger women have about what the Women's Liberation Movement was like, and what kinds of actions we took. A row with a younger friend led me to thinking about the connection with the campaign I'm most active in now, Friends of Hackney Nurseries. This is basically an alliance of parents, staff and community activists in Hackney who want to save the threatened nurseries. And Hackney's in a ridiculous situation, only because of how bad things are elsewhere, that we actually have had one of the largest proportions of childcare provided anywhere in the country over the last 10-15 years. If you look at why this is, it's because of this huge network of community nurseries—around 23 at



The 1930s saw a lot of civil unrest due to high unemployment and economic depression. Here, women pickets battle it out at the Newton Steel Company strike in Michigan, USA, in June 1937.



the moment. Now probably the last 10 that set up were actually more or less out of fairly straight Council initiatives. But the first dozen were all squatted by groups of feminists! So a lot of these community nurseries that are now very straight organisations, are actually the result of Women's Liberation activism, squatting these Council-owned buildings and refusing to go away and saying 'We want a nursery here!' I think this is terribly important that people understand that. Particularly in Women's Aid, I don't know how many refuges there are around the country now, and I suppose most of them are run in a rather conventional way with police support and social workers, which is not all totally bad but, you know… without the really radical influence of a lot of feminists squatting buildings, doing all this stuff, we wouldn't have that now.

Most of these groups took funding at some stage, which is probably what led to their de-radicalization, though you wouldn't necessarily blame people for taking funding under certain circumstances. Up until 18 months ago the London Rape Crisis Centre had managed to stay a completely autonomous feminist organisation. And they were in danger of losing their grant simply for that. Also, I know of a lot of organisations which used to be run collectively. Then the London Boroughs Grants Scheme made it a condition of continued funding that they stop being a collective and introduce a hierarchy and a manager. My experience of the nursery campaign at the moment is that the community nurseries are entirely dependent on funding from the Council. I must say, I do not fancy the idea of having to tell these 20 groups that the only way they can save themselves is by squatting their buildings. We'll have to see, it's a slightly softly softly approach right now.

How would you sum up the differences you mentioned between socialist and radical feminists?

There was a very early slogan I always felt sort of bridged the gap, which was 'There will be no women's liberation without socialism, there will be no socialism without women's liberation.' This is extremely true. It was never that straightforward in practice, but the crudest way of putting it is that socialist feminists thought the initiating cause of oppression was capitalism, and that if you sort capitalism out, then women's liberation would sort of come along as a part of that. And therefore they were always prepared to work with men. Whereas radical feminists thought the initiating cause of oppression was patriarchy, and that men, even before you had capitalism, have always oppressed women, and that was the underlying cause of oppression. And it's not that radical feminists never worked with men, I was always prepared to, but that if you couldn't sort out the relationship between patriarchy and women's oppression, then you weren't going to be able to sort out capitalism. That was the split, kind of crudely put. And I always felt that I straddled the two. Then there were the separatists who would have nothing to do with men, at all, down to ridiculous things like they purged their record collections of anything with men in them. And then there were some radical feminists like myself who were utterly convinced the problem was patriarchy but a) were prepared to work in alliances with men and b) didn't think that capitalism was irrelevant.

Would you say radical feminists were generally more pro-woman, not necessarily separatist?

There was what was called the pro-woman line, which is political, not about the personal behaviour of any particular woman. It's that in a fight between a man and a woman, you automatically take the woman's side. You should, of course you didn't always, but you should also believe that every woman was doing what she had to in order to get by. That was certainly what I tried to live by. So I think to that extent you can say that radical feminists were more pro-woman, but I wouldn't say they were so in terms of incredibly nice behaviour.

Back to those differences, I think patriarchy and capital are so dependent on each other and so related. Anarchist feminism seems to be fusing socialist and radical feminism by referring to 'patriarchal capitalism' and power as such as what they're fighting against.

It's very important to understand the position of anarchism. I suppose I always thought of myself as a libertarian socialist. Certainly some of the political activists in the '60s were anarchists and some of these were women who became Women's Liberationists. There were always anarchist feminist groups, although they were never huge. But what that leaves out of the equation is the fact that if you look at radical feminist ways of organising, and analyse them in terms of more conventional male politics, the thing they're actually closest to is anarchism. Socialist feminists tended more towards traditional Marxist forms of organisation—hierarchical, democratic centralist etc., which I just never had any taste for. But all that was never explicit. What I felt I





Challenging all authority in the Spanish Revolution of 1936, women organised and educated themselves in the 'Mujeres Libres' federation and fought in the autonomous militias against the fascists.

was doing was organising myself politically in a way that I felt comfortable with. That was how most of us were organised. Even a lot of women who were definitely socialist feminists were organising in a non-hierarchical, small group kind of way. The roots of the movement in terms of organised politics was the New Left, a student movement, which was predominantly Marxist, plus women from other radical political groups such as trade unions and blck groups. But other influences were 'ordinary women', women who had previously not been politically involved. A very interesting group was for example a group of mums and housewives from Peckham in South London. People like that, and I suppose people like—a working class beneficiary of the post-war welfare state—we just made it up as we went along. It's kind of interesting that it turned out to be an anarchist type of organising.

Could you describe the methods you used, of action for example?

What kinds of actions did we do? Well, there were the famous ones, like the first one that got prominence in this country, the invasion of the Miss World competition. The first kind of things I did were for example, when I was in my group in Cambridge, there was a single mother, she was having an awful lot of trouble with the Social Security. So some of the women in the group went down and occupied the Social Security offices. There was a lot of that kind of occupying of offices—one time a group of women invaded the offices of one of the Fleet Street papers about the ways women were represented in it. We were rather strong on symbolic gestures. There was also lots of squatting. You see, that's another thing, when we talk about action, it's very easy to get hung up on patriarchal notions of what taking action's all about. I think we definitely did see from the very beginning that changing your life was taking direct action. It's easy to see how bit by bit that has been co-opted into lifestylism, making my life better and sod the rest of you. But thousands of women just putting down the drying-up cloth, that was a startling phenomenon at the time. And an awful lot of women left their men. And I think that's a big act of rebellion. We're not just talking about women running away to battered women's refuges, but the Women's Liberation Movement made an awful lot of women realise that they didn't have to stay. And statistics up to today show that a higher number of divorces are actually initiated by women. There were also an awful lot of meetings and conferences, writing pamphlets, going on demos…

What about the group methods?

Yes, one of the original political tools was what we called consciousness-raising groups. The idea was you would have your consciousness raising group in which you would discover your common oppression as women and then that would enable you to think of imaginative action to take. That was obviously where a lot of the personal stuff like leaving your husband came from—women would egg each other on. 'Go on leave him!!' And once you realised in the group that it wasn't just you… Women did support each other a lot, in the basic ways of taking each other in.

There were certainly separatist women, not hundreds and hundreds, but quite a lot, enough to make you feel that that was an option, whether or not you necessarily wanted to follow that option yourself, but it encouraged the rest of us, I think. On the one hand I've got quite strong reservations about separatist politics, because I actually don't think it's helpful as



a political strategy. However, the good side of it was that those women were absolutely clear that men were the enemy, they weren't going to have anything to do with men at all until after the revolution, and that it was only by being separatist that women would learn the necessary skills both practical and emotional they needed to really invigorate themselves. I think that that was very encouraging. There was a very moralistic element about it, where women were made to feel that unless they were separatist they were letting the side down. Occasionally I now come across women who were very separatist in the '70s and have mellowed out. I feel kind of ambivalent because on the one hand I'm pleased they mellowed out a bit, but on the other hand, I remember what a hard time they used to give people! It certainly was a viable lifestyle, mostly conducted in squats or in collective women's houses, one or two of which turned into women's housing co-ops and housing associations.

The consciousness-raising groups, I always wondered where they came from. How did they get together?

What we had from the very early days in London, and in other cities as well, was a Women's Liberation Newsletter. And basically, I think what you need for any kind of substantial radical movement is grassroots communication. The London Women's Liberation Newsletter came out every week—which was really quite an achievement. On the hand it is a bit of a mystery how women found their way in. On the other hand, they just kind of did and lots of towns had Women's Centres and there were local newsletters. I suppose in the early days those were the main public arenas.

What would you say are other lessons that can be learnt from the Women's Liberation Movement, especially considering all the talk of a 'post-feminist society' and the only place you find feminists today is in academia? It seems far away, women taking action and on the streets as feminists.

I know! I feel weird having this conversation because it really makes it clear to me how historical it is in some ways. I'm sitting here with another grown-up who is asking me about things like they were another lifetime. Well, I think the lesson that I would learn is that it's bollocks that we are in a post-feminist period. It's complete bollocks, on any level, from women's equal pay to the level of domestic violence. On any indicator, women are clearly still oppressed. But it's also clear that we have made progress and it would be really foolish, not so say depressing, to say women have achieved nothing in the last 30 years. One of the first lessons that I would like us to learn is there's no point giving up, you just have to keep plugging away. The other important thing is that we need a strong autonomous Women's Liberation Movement to make sure that women's politics are kept on the political agenda. And I think that women meeting on their own as part of a political movement is absolutely essential. The only way to combat the recent lack of women's issues on the political agenda is for women to get together with other women from their organisations, and meet separately, because it's so easy as a woman to feel isolated and relatively powerless. It's important to take charge and know that you are really powerful. But it makes it a hell of a lot easier if you do it with a bunch of other women.

It feels like there's nothing specific anymore about women's resistance, as if there was no point to it—all political action is supposed to be all inclusive. Feminism is seen as a limited, single-issue approach and women only action/groups unnecessary and even counterproductive.

I believe it needs some of us older feminists who've been around since the second time around to keep reminding those of you who I'll call the third wave (or the last bit of the second wave or whatever) that actually these are the issues, that we can work together, and it's possible to do these things. Another lesson I'd learn is that men have to bloody change. And it's absolutely no good for men to sit around and bellyache. I think what I have always felt is I'm not at all, not at all interested in what a man has to *say*. What I'm interested in is what a man *does*. Is he there doing 50% of the childcare? Is he there doing the cooking? Is he there taking minutes at the meeting? While the women can get on doing stuff, basically allowing women to take their space. I don't want to hear his theory, not in that context. My partner is very active politically, and he's very concerned about men's oppression, but he channels his political action into stuff that's generally not around sexual politics. But what he does, is he does 50% of the childcare, he probably cooks more than me, he's actually there where it counts, and that's what I'm interested in. I think that's what any self-respecting woman or man should be interested in.

I have also been interested for years in women's collective history. Having this conversation with you is very interesting because it makes me realise how



important it is. There has been a certain amount that's been researched, although not very much, stuff like the chronology of the Women's Liberation Movement, published by the Bradford Feminist Archive, that's crucial. Did I tell you I've got an article that's coming out in a book fairly shortly? It's actually an academic book, my first academic article! It's looking at the feasibility of producing an electronic history of the Women's Liberation Movement, but what it's basically about, or why I want it to be written, is because I have become aware of the fact that these conversations like we're having are starting to happen all around the place. I think not losing our history is actually a rather political thing that could be done.

Without seeing the Women's Liberation Movement as a concluded thing...

That's right, seeing it as a continuum. For god's sake I hope I've got another 30 years in me, I intend to be part of a third wave.



In 1984, forty women police officers stormed the South London hospital for women (the only one of its kind in the UK) to end the nine month occupation in defiance at the threat of its closure.

Further Reading:

'68,'78,'88. From Womens' Liberation to Feminism, Amanda Sebestyen (ed.), Prism Press 1988, ISBN 1-85327-022-9: An attempt to document 20 years of the Women's Liberation Movement. The various contributions cover a wide range of issues from a wide range of backgrounds, including many first-time writers.

The Raven, Anarchist Quarterly Number 21, *Feminism, Anarchism, Women*, Freedom Press 1993: This includes theoretical anarcha-feminist contributions plus appraisals of various anarchist women in history. One essay though is really annoying: 'Men Are Human Beings, Too!' by Peter Geiger, a frustrated bloke with odd misconceptions of feminism. Twat.

Beyond Power. Women, Men and Morals, Marilyn French, Abacus 1985, ISBN 0-349-11335-1: The author has taken on an immense task with this book—investigating the nature and effects of power throughout society and throughout history. She manages surprisingly well, in an informative and readable way.

Untying the Knot, Jo Freeman & Cathy Levine, Dark Star and Rebel Press: Two influential contributions to the question of organisation in the Women's Liberation Movement. Reprinted here as a pamphlet, they both still have relevance also in other contexts.

Reinventing Anarchy, Again, Howard J. Ehrlich (ed.), AK Press 199X, ISBN 1-873176-88-0: This anthology deals with anarcha-feminism in Part Four, including a contribution by Carol Ehrlich, reprinted by Spectacular Times as a cheaper pamphlet called *Women and the Spectacle*. This is recommended reading for all those who doubt feminism's significance in an anarchist theory.

The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir, Picador Classics 1988, ISBN 0-330-303384: A classic analysis of a woman's position in society. At times a bit generalising but a useful tool in understanding patriarchy.

The Female Eunuch, Germaine Greer, Paladin Press 1971, ISBN 0-586-08055-4: Another classic of the Women's Liberation Movement, this is detailed, humourous and inspiring. Also recommended is her new book: The Whole Woman: a reassessment of the feminist movement today.

Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism, bell hooks, South End Press 1981: This explores dealing with two identities—being black and a woman, and how feminism relates to black women's realities.

Novels

Academia invented the abstract issue—before that, politics was based on reality. And reality is far better conveyed through stories than dull long sentences. The power of the novel should not be underestimated. Some of the best feminist books (but also some of the worst) are in the form of novels and have become classics in the Women's Liberation Movement. These are the ones that inspired me most:

Braided Lives, Vida, and others by Marge Piercy
The Women's Room, Marilyn French
The Shame is Over, Anja Meulenbelt
The Awakening, Kate Chopin
The Bean Trees, and others by Barbara Kingsolver
The Colour Purple, and others by Alice Walker

The New Luddite War
We Will Destroy Genetic Engineering!



Two years ago direct action against genetic engineering in Britain was non-existent. Two years later and it has become one of the main struggles in which our movements are involved. Hundreds of new people have got active in everything from mass trashings to night time sabotage. With over seventy experimental Genetically Modified (GM) test sites destroyed, our action is crippling the advance of the technology. This article will cover how the campaign has evolved and some of the reasons why it is so important that genetic engineering is stopped. Many newspapers have covered the ecological and health disasters that could arise if genetic engineering goes badly wrong. Instead this article will chart the ecological, social and health disasters that will arise if genetic engineering goes badly right.

Though Britain has been the (First World) country where actions against genetic engineering have really kicked off, people have been resisting for over a decade all over the world. The first outdoor genetic test site was a crop of genetically engineered strawberries at the University of California in 1987. The night after the plants had been transplanted Earth First!ers climbed fences, evaded security guards and succeeded in pulling up all 2,000 plants.[1] In 1989 Earth First!ers destroyed yet more test sites in the US which in turn inspired actions in Holland where three test sites were dug up. Claiming responsibility for the Dutch attacks, the 'Raging Diggers' stated in their July 1991 communique:

"The destruction of a test field is designed to both start a discussion on the subject of bio-technology, as well as to offer a direct counter to pro-biotechnology propaganda in the form of sabotage!"[2]

Throughout the early and mid nineties a growing alliance of Indian peasant groups organised against GM and the patenting of seeds. The campaign, which involved everything from setting up community seed banks to the mass destruction of an installation belonging to the multinational Cargill, culminated in a 500,000 strong demonstration. Back in Europe, 1996 saw German eco-anarchists squatting fields to stop them being planted as genetic test sites. A third of all sites were prevented from being sown that year and many of those which had been sown were subsequently sabotaged. By the end of the year twelve sites had been dug up, and the remaining experiments were under 24 hour police guard.[3] Crop squats and anti-GM actions in Germany continued throughout the following year. The growing international nature of the resistance showed itself on April 21st '97 when activists simultaneously occupied



Monsanto's head offices in both Britain and America. Two weeks later a GM potato test site was dug up belonging to the Federal Research Institute of Germany. The leader of the research project described it as 'a direct hit'.

> "On the 8th of June [1997] just five days after the action in Germany the Super Heroes Against Genetix decided to play cricket on a GM potato test field site just outside Cambridge. Due to the nature of a somewhat muddy and sticky wicket, potatoes replaced the traditional red ball. Fielders had a difficult time of it—most of the batting resulting in the 'balls' being smashed to pieces, or else being lost amongst upturned soil. The entire GM crop was destroyed."[4]

Days after the first British GM test site sabotage, Germany saw another field dug up, this time GM sugar beet. Around two months later more sites were dug up in Britain followed in November '97 by the first of many GM site trashings by the French *Confederation Paysanne* (p. 103). The following year saw a massive escalation of direct action in Britain with numerous office occupations and test site sabotages. In 1998 over thirty test sites were destroyed, including seven rape-seed-oil experiments in different parts of the country on the same night. Last year also saw the first genetic experiment planted in Ireland. Almost immediately the experiment was dug up, never to be replaced. The year ended with the Indian farmers in Karnataka launching 'Operation Cremate Monsanto' by setting fire to three of the companys crops.

Already this year over thirty three sites have been destroyed in Britain either through covert action at night (p. 101) or mass trashings in daylight (p. 99). During the glorious *Carnival against Capital* in the City of London on June 18th, the British HQ of agribusiness multinational Cargill was closed down and its windows and foyer smashed up (p. 1). The international aspect has grown too, with Indian farmers visiting a squatted genetic test site in Essex and blockading a pro- GM greenwash institute in London (p. 97). On the other side of the Channel, the French peasants are continuing their actions, while across the Atlantic, American activists have destroyed three test sites—one action claimed by the 'Cropatistas'. As I write, three people have been remanded in prison for alleged 'Conspiracy to Cause Criminal Damage' at a GM maize field in Lincolnshire (p. 104). For those unaware of what lies behind genetic engineering this explosion of activity around the globe might seem strange. The next part of the article will aim to give a bit of background to the issues of power behind the struggle.

Elite Technology—Weaponry for the Class War

Enveloped in darkness, they walked silently through the fields, groups of friends intent on destruction.



May '98 saw activists occupy a trashed genetic test site in Norfolk. Laughs and lettuces replaced corporate agribusiness as a new community took control.



The elite's new technology was their target and night after night they laid their blows at progress. The repression started, but while captured comrades languished in prison, others walked the night time paths. I could be describing today's campaign against genetic engineering but I am not. These bands of merry friends are of the past and despite bravery, imagination and countless escapades they failed. The war waged at the beginning of the last century by the Luddites of Northern England against the elite's new technology—the emerging factory system—was lost, drowned in blood and compromise. The following years saw an armed uprising (the Swing Riots) by the rural poor against new technologies in agriculture, but that too was defeated. The price of such deafets is the ecological destruction, pathologcally warped emotions and wage slavery of global industrialism.

A strange tale to tell in an article about the resistance to genetic engineering? No. On the nights I have helped destroy genetic test sites I have thought of people, like those described above, who walked the night time paths before me. Listening to their voices both inspires me and helps me pick out the truth otherwise drowned out by the cacophony of corporate propaganda. With vast budgets the PR departments of the GM companies are trying to convince us that their technology is aimed at feeding the poor and increasing food production.[5] The Luddites of the past remind us of the reality, that the technologies foisted upon the poor by the elite are aimed at accruing profit and power. As one Indian scientist put it;

"Monocultures spread not because they produce more, but because they control more."[6]

We and the Luddites are fighters in the same war. Two hundred years ago the English elite's main enemy was the peasantry who lived for the most part outside the cash economy and were forever rising up. The elite used the enclosure of land and the mechanisation of crafts and agriculture to crush the rebellious autonomy of the English poor. The class was eradicated by physical force and the elite's technology and forced either to become either wage slaves in the emerging factories or on the farms of the rich.

Two hundred years, and many struggles later, the British poor are for the most part wasting their life in crap jobs or depressed and drug-ridden on the dole—their rebelliousness almost totally extinguished, our history forgotten.Meanwhile the—now global—elite continues to wage a war on the class that remains the main threat to its existence—the global peasantry.

The Triumph of the Code

Enabled by the total colonisation of the seed, control of the global food industry will be further centralised into the hands of transnational corporations. This is the technologies' aim. This fusion of the agribusiness corporation and techno-science now culminates in the triumph of the logic of the code; in particular, the genetic-code of biotechnology, and the bar-code of consumer-industrial capitalism. The genetic-code and the bar-code are the means through which ever more aspects of contemporary life are being colonised, commodified and controlled. In this context, perhaps the fusion of these two codes may even lead to the imprinting of bar codes directly onto the DNA of genetically engineered organisms. Scientists at the Novagene corporation have apparently already 'devoted enormous time and money to write the company logo into a cell, the world's first living trademark.' (Cary Fowler et.al, '*The Laws of life*', Development Dialogue, 1/2 1988, p. 55.)

The relative autonomy and link with the land which fuelled the Zapatiastas in Mexico, the Viet Cong in Vietnam and the MST in Brasil has to be destroyed. This is where genetic engineering comes in.

The new technologies being pushed by the food industry—a sector which has more companies in the top 1000 than any other—aim to purposefully destroy the social fabric that keeps the land community together and to fully incorporate the peasantry into the global cash economy. The threat is neutralised and becomes fuel for the machine's further expansion.

To understand genetic engineering you have to look at the process it is part of. The last thirty years have seen, in what was called the 'green revolution' (sic), massive industrialisation of agriculture in the Third World. The highly expensive inputs for industrial agriculture; machines, pesticides etc. have forced millions of small farmers off their land. Mechanisation has made redundant many jobs done by agricultural labourers. This process is purposeful, as it was two hundred years ago when the elite dispossessed our ancestors. As one pro-industrialisation advocate put it:

> "Economic development. is not compatible with the maintainance of a people's traditional customs. What is needed is a change in the totality of their culture and their psychological attitude, their way of life. What is therefore



required amounts to social disorganisation. Unhappiness and discontentment in the sense of wanting more than is obtainable is to be generated. The suffering and dislocation that is caused is the price that has to be paid for economic development."[7]

The poor pay the price while the elite reap the profit. Radical social movements usually can't keep up with the rapid rate of social change, failing to effectively organise. As a result the dispossessed turn 'the violence of the green revolution' not on their enemies (who sit back comfortably in air conditioned offices often thousands of miles away) but on their own class and families. Increases in suicide, the domestic abuse of both women and children, and the re-emergence of serious communal/religious conflict have all been linked by Indian eco-feminists to this social dislocation.[8] In general women bear the brunt of the horror caused, especially the malnourshiment and hunger. In her new book, Germaine Greer points out that women are also increasingly burdened with the sole responsibility of child rearing. Lone female headed families are the poorest sector of the worlds population.

"As the extended family has crumbled under the pressure of urbanisation, increasing landlessness and economic change men no longer constrained by their elders to live as husbands and fathers have backed away from women and children. One quarter of all families in the world are headed by a loan female. In the Caribbean, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa it is about a third and rising."[9]

Going hand in hand with the destruction of human lives, has been devastation of the ecologies those lives were once a part of. In the Third World, as in Britain, industrial agriculture is responsible for more ecological destruction than any other factor. Corporate PR agencies have been spreading the idea that GM crops will need less chemical spraying and are therefore good for the environment. The truth is that the most common GM plant varieties have been engineered to be 'herbicide tolerant'. This enables a crop to be sprayed with more chemicals than ever before.

In general, genetic-industrial agriculture is characterised by both continuities and discontinuities with the chemical-industrial approach of green revolution agriculture.



Jaws drop at an agricultural fair when activists trashed a GM display crop.

It is continous with it to the extent that they both share a static, one-dimensional, commodified, fragmented, uniform, toxic, and capital and input-intensive approach to agriculture. Genetic-industrial agriculture will continue, and indeed extend, the industrialisation of agricultural production, including the practice of monoculture cropping, the replacement of diverse plant varieties with static laboratory-bred varieties, and the use of toxic inputs.

Genetic engineering will also enable the destructive practices of industrial agriculture to continue where they may otherwise have reached their limits by creating plants that can tolerate greater quantities of chemical inputs or that are adapted to the soils degraded by industrial agricultural practices. For these reasons, the new genetically engineered seeds and inputs will perpetuate and intensify the environmental problems and concentrations of power and wealth produced by chemical-industrial agriculture. Indeed it is the very same multinational corporations that have developed and continue to sell chemical products and hybrid seeds that are now developing and commercialising the products of genetic engineering.



Despite these continuities, the elite's new technologies differ significantly in the mode in which they take hold of nature and reconstitute it in new forms, since they now engage with organisms at the molecular level. In being able to tamper directly with the genetic structure of organisms, and to transfer genes across species boundaries, genetic engineering creates new kinds of ecological dangers as well as new forms of social control.[10]

The Colonisation of the Seed

The relative autonomy of the peasantry has always rested on its ability to grow its own food without the major involvement of the market. Every harvest farmers can collect the seeds from their crops and resow the following year. In many ways, the seed both symbolically and actually holds the key to freedom. Understanding this, the elite's new technologies change the seed from a key to freedom to a key to further slavery.

One of the most important weapons being developed for use against the rural poor is 'terminator technology'. Terminator technology allows seed companies to sterilise new varieties, meaning that farmers will not be able to obtain healthy seeds for the following year at harvest. Instead, every year they will have to buy seeds off the corporations. This is once again an extension of the green revolution which created hybridised seeds that were by nature sterile. However, in the past, hybridisation has not been possible with many crops. Terminator technology will allow companies to sterilise any of their seeds. Research at the moment is aimed at crops such as rice, wheat, sorghum and soya beans, the basis of a large section of the world's daily survival. To paraphrase Brecht; "First control their fodder, then you're in control of their philosophy".



Indian farmers in Karnataka burn GM crop in 'Operation Cremate Monsanto'.

> "Through patents and genetic engineering, new colonies are being carved out. The land, the forests, the rivers, the oceans, and the atmosphere have all been colonised, eroded, and polluted. Capital now has to look for new colonies to invade and exploit for its further accumulation. These new colonies are, in my view, the interior spaces of the bodies of women, plants and animals. Resistance to [biotechnology] is a resistance to the ultimate colonisation of life itself—of the future of evolution as well as the future of non-Western traditions of relating to and knowing nature. It is a struggle to protect



The structures go up and the sun goes down over a GM crop squat in Essex. (May 1999)





The mobilisation of communities all around the country has succeeded in engendering wide scale mistrust of GM. The next stage must be massive assaults on the corporations and scientists behind the approaching nightmare. Give those kids a mask and a monkeywrench.

> the freedom of diverse species to evolve. It is a struggle to protect the freedom of diverse cultures to evolve."[11]

Like most dominant technologies in this society, genetic engineering is an ecologically destructive, socially devastating weapon used by the elite in its continuing war of expansion against the wild and the worlds poor. In this context it is handy to remember that Monsanto was the producer of Agent Orange, the chemical defoliant used by America in its war with the peasantry of Vietnam. It is no accident that Chiapas, home to the Mexican Zapatistas, is the first place where GM trees are being commercially grown. [12]

Disarming the Elite

What strategies can we use? Many reformist campaigners have mistakenly pinned their hopes on two tactics; (a) lobbying government and (b) consumer boycotts. Neither of these tactics can stop or seriously slow down genetic engineering. Lobbying the state will never have an impact because Western governments are in fact corporate fronts and genetic engineering is too important to them. Third World elites who see genetic engineering as a further grasping back of the small amounts of power they have over their turf, almost unanimously oppose patents on life and GM technology. They are irrelevant, none have the power to stand up to the global elite pushing genetic engineering. This was graphically shown at the 1999 International Bio-Safety Protocol Negotiations:

> "As ever the motives were money and power, with the N. Americans wanting to continue in their global control, the Europeans trying to re-assert their right to the global foray at par with N. Americans; and the Southerners trying to be spared from continuing to be the prey"[13]

The above quote is the view of Dr Tewolde Egziabher, the general manager of Ethiopia's Environmental Protection Authority and chairperson of the African group of delegates at the negotiations. His conclusion was that global elite's aim in running the conference was probably that "it merely wished to fool its own public".

On the surface, consumer boycotts look more hopeful; at least they hit the companies in the pocket. Due to mad cow disease and other similar crises the European public are very suspicious of anything the companies and government say about food. Most people also feel that GM is inherently 'wrong', that is 'tampering with nature'. Despite massive PR propaganda by both the state and the corporations this view only solidifies. A report leaked to Greenpeace, written for Monsanto reveals:

> "An ongoing collapse of public support for biotechnology and GM foods. At each point in this project, we keep thinking that we have reached the low point and that public thinking will stabilise, but we apparently have not reached that point". [14]

Some retailers interviewed believed there was a 'fifty-fifty' chance of 'losing to the pressure groups'. Against the odds, thanks mainly to small local demonstrations, trolley blockades, determined leafleting and pure public cynicism many retailers are backing out of GM foods. Indeed, the elite is getting very worried at this situation. The deputy head





After campaigners destroyed the first GM trees in Britain, one scientist adopts the dewy-eyed 'how could they cut down the trees' expression. Hey, I thought us eco-warriors had trademarked that look.

of the American Treasury said in a statement to the Senate this spring that the campaign against genetic engineering in Europe "is the greatest block to global economic liberalisation presently in existence". People deserve to give themselves a pat on the back for this. However, as the main market for GM crops will be in the Third World consumer boycotts in the first world cannot stop the advancement of genetic engineering.

Two hundred years ago the English elite was forced to construct its new technological weaponry—the factory system—in hostile territory. Night after night the Luddites of northern England laid waste to the technology they knew was aimed directly at the destruction of their communties. Two hundred years later, the elite designs its new technological weapons thousands of miles from the people who will eventually feel the effects. Unable to reach and destroy the experiments themselves the peasantry are forced to rely on us to be the long arms of the third world. We must make the territory *hostile again*.

The challenge has been taken up and people all over Europe are walking in the footsteps of the Luddites. The test site sabotage is crippling the development of the technology, giving valuable breathing space to Third World movements and really beginning to intimidate companies. This year after many of its test sites were destroyed, Britain's leading plant breeding company, CPB Twyford, announced that it was pulling out of the development of GM crops. In a press statement they said;

"...it was felt that the risks of continuing work with GMOs were not worth taking while the threat of indiscriminate vandalism exists."

Other research organisations have also given up on genetics due to the possibility of their crops being uprooted. This includes the Royal Agricultural College, who were told by their insurers that premiums would rise massively if GM crops were planted. Nearly half of all test sites in Britain have been destroyed this year and the number will continue to rise.

As the Luddites of today, we know that given the continuation of this society, halting—forever—the development of new technological weaponry might not be possible. Even if we don't succeed in stopping genetic engineering we have already slowed down the introduction of this technology. What this means in real terms is that we've succeeded in delaying the further degradation of the lives of millions of people. We have delayed for months, maybe years the ecological destruction, hunger, dispair and domestic abuse that social dislocation brings. If that is all we succeed in then we have achieved much.

Growing the Global Land Community

As well as the 'thumb in the dam' aspect of anti-GM, campaigns, the resistance is serving other purposes. Groups all over the world are linking up, training and learning from each other. France, America, Britain, Holland, Germany, Ireland and India- people are together taking action. The hope for a free and ecological future lies in these embryonic movements which understand their enemies are the machine and its masters, and their comrades the land and its lovers. In helping to catalyse the growth of these revolutionary ecological groups around the world the elite may have designed a weapon which will rebound on themselves.



Under the cover of the mass, masks and midnight we, the new Luddites, will continue to fight back in the land struggle that has never ended.

'Together we, the peasants and you, the poor of Europe will fight the multinationals with our sweat, and together we will succeed in defeating them!' - from a speech in London by an Indian peasant of the Bharta Kissan Union- Punjab, May 1999

References

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3. *Anti-Genetics Actions: Crop Circle Chaos and Vegetable Vandalism*, Do or Die No. 6, p. 57.
4. *Genetix Update* June 1997, No. 1.
5. The increased food production of green revolution agriculture is yet another development fallacy. Study after study has shown that labor intensive small scale agriculture is far more efficient in producing food than capital intensive large scale agriculture. Nonindustrial farming techniques produce a large supply of food, consisting of many crops. Industrial-monoculture on the other hand produces a larger supply of one particular crop but a smaller amount of food in general. This uniform production of crops lends itself to mass society and the non-local—and therefore formal —economy. Production from the perspective of capitalist economics is relevant only if it is commodified. In the starving of the millions we see the conflict between commodity production for the market and food production for the stomach.
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10. *Colonising the Seed* by Gyorgy Scrinis (FOE Australia)
11. *Bio-Piracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge* by Vandana Shiva, (Green Books, 1998) p11
12. See the June 1999 report *Eucalyptus, Neoliberalism and NAFTA in Southeastern Mexico*, as yet not published on paper but available on the web http://www.acerca.org/eucalyptus_mexico2.html
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14. *Genetix Update* December/January 1999 No.11


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Further Reading

Colonising the Seed: Genetic Engineering and Techno-Industrial Agriculture by Gyorgy Scrinis. Available from AK Press see page 332 for contact details. If you read one thing on genetics, read this pamphlet. ***Biopoltics: A Feminist and Ecological reader on Biotechnology***, ed.Vandana Shiva and Ingunn Moser, (Zed Books 1995) £14.95, 294 pages, ISBN 1-85649-336-9 Overly academic but nevertheless illuminating collection of essays on everything from genetics and the Third World to the flawed reductionism of western science! ***Farmageddon: Confronting Industrial Agriculture***, Do or Die No. 7, p40 An over view of the history of land struggle and the horrors of industrial agriculture. ***The Luddites War on Industry: A story of machine smashing and spies***, Do or Die No. 6, p. 65 Learn about some of our inspirational political ancestors. ***BioPiracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge*** by Vandana Shiva, (Green Books 1998), 143 pages, £7.95 Without a doubt the best book written on genetics and power, even more powerful as it comes from a Third World author. ***Genetic Engineering, Food and Our Environment*** by Luke Anderson, (Green Books, 1999), 160 pages, £3.95 A newly published intro guide to the subject, though coming from a rather reformist perspective is definitely worth reading. Contains good scary facts.

The Inter-Continental Caravan



"[Industrial agriculture has]... driven millions of peasants off their land... to the slums of the cities... The introduction of genetic engineering in food production will increase... the control of agri-business of the food system..., causing massive ecological hazards... and the impoverishment of farmers all over the world... Genetic engineering and patents on life represent one of the most serious threats ever faced by humankind..."
- From the ICC manifesto, by the Union of Peasants of the State of Karnataka (KRRS), India.

In May 1999 a coachload of Indians and Nepalese, mostly from peasants unions in Gujarrat and Punjab arrived in Britain. They were part of the Inter-Continental Caravan (ICC), in which nearly 300 campaigners from the South travelled through Europe, holding talks, demonstrations and direct action.

The initiators were the Union of the Peasants of the State of Karnataka (KRRS) whose previous actions include the brick by brick destruction of an installation belonging to the multinational agri-business firm Cargill; the destruction of the first Kentucky Fried Chicken in India; and burning genetic test sites and a demonstration against the World Trade Organisation involving 300,000 people.Their aim with this project was to bring attention in Europe to the struggles in the South and link up with western groups 'fighting the same battles'. The organisation of the ICC was absolute fucking chaos, and the project itself questionable (see page 28) but as one of the cooks I found the experience of meeting the farmers really inspiring.We chatted with them between meals, learnt about each others' movements and swapped stories and addresses. The farmers were keen to do some actions and the main vent of their anger while they were in Britain was genetic engineering. For us here in the west, the motivation behind our fight against genetic engineering can be a bit abstract. For the Indian farmers it's about their own survival.

In May the Nufield Institute, a greenwash think tank, released a report arguing that genetic engineering was needed to help the third world poor. In what was a beautiful coincidence, the day they released the report coincided with the arrival of the ICC. The following day the third world gave its reply. After marching from a public meeting half a mile away, the farmers and a hundred supporters stormed the office, and blockaded the street outside. They demanded a meeting with the head of the institute, which the



totally shocked, shaken and confused staff agreed to. They were told by the Indians that

> "We will not let your corporations justify genetic engineering with the lie that it will alleviate the suffering, dispossession and poverty that these same corporations are responsible for—and hope to increase—with the introduction of GM crops to our country"

Whilst inside the greenwashers were being given a bit of an earful outside Punjabi farmers taught British activists Indian anti-GM chants. The meeting ended with the farmers asking for payment for the advice they had given the institute.

> "After all, you pay a fortune for an english researcher's opinion on how to *run our lives* and we have come all the way from India to tell you how *we will live our lives*."

This was as far as I am aware the first time that anyone has demanded payment from an institution for the service of blockading, occupying and closing down its office!

Meanwhile up north, activist friends were attempting to set up a crop squat to host a visit by the Indians. Moving in late at night, they set up on a genetic test site near Nottingham which had been trashed weeks before. The tripods and shelters went up, everything was going like clockwork, that was until the cops turned up. Under squatting law the occupation of the site was actually legal but the police would have none of it. They moved in the next morning and evicted the site. A disaster! The northerners, by now weary from scant sleep, set about preparing to take another site. Driving nearly two hundred miles south they took over a trashed genetic test site in Essex. Once again the tripod and benders went up and everyone awaited the cops. Thankfully Essex police were less vigilant than their northern counterparts.

The news of the successful occupation got to us in London and after a bit of deliberation (*'Can we shout slogans?'* one farmer asked. '*Yes*', *'Oh then we come!'*) half the Indians and us from the cooking crew climbed on board the bus and set off. Driving through London the Indians spotted some allotments—which being farmers fascinated them. We explained that after the peasantry had been dispossessed these small sites were all the land available to the poor. They were truly horrified. Essex really confused them. As we walked for two miles—flags in one hand cooking pots in the other—through vast agri-business fields, one Indian asked where the people lived? To them a deserted countryside peppered for the most part with the houses of middle class farmers and commuters was a horrific vision. Seeing our country for a moment through their eyes really revealed how dispossessed we really are.

After weaving our way through various fields we arrived at the crop squat. In what was a truly bizzare moment the Indians walked onto the site brandishing their placards and chanting in Punjabi greeted by some British activists playing mandolins, fiddles and assorted folk paraphernalia. We cooked up a big soup and everyone sat down to eat. Activists from both countries discussed strategies over dinner. A Punjabi sung a beautiful song from the resistance against English imperialism accompanied by one our our own mandolin players. After the applause finished one Gujarati exclaimed *'Now we fight the greatest empire ever—together'*. Very soon it was time for the farmers to go, the Sikhs had an appointment at the Temple. Banners and flags were swapped with the Indians promising that they'd put our banner at the front of their next demo in the Punjab. The sun set on our two flags flying together on the site monopole. Cheesy as it all sounds the Indian farmers visit really gave me a feeling of global unity. The Indians too seemed to feel this. One said:



"We have not even dreamt that people of this part of the world, the peasants and the poor people of Europe would join us in our struggle against the multinationals. With this we are not only happy, we are strengthened, empowered and we assure you we'll double our fight."

After four days in Britain we waved the caravan goodbye as it drove off to France—where the Indian farmers linked-up with the union of french peasants. and destroyed a GM-rice test site



Agr'Evence!



On the 18th of July 1999, 700 activists ripped, rolled and raged their way through twenty five acres of contaminated farmland in Watlington, Oxfordshire—destroying a field of GM oilseed rape 24 times bigger than a football pitch in another installment of The Big Match between the bio-tech bullies and their government lap dogs, (the corporate culprit being AgrEvo in this case) and... well, just about everyone else!

The Stop the Crop National Rally and GM test site 'visit' began innocently enough despite the bevy of police cameras filming people donning suits (it pays to get your disguise on in advance!). In a field opposite the offending site, a seriously hot summer sun blazed down on hundreds of disparate people drawn from all over the country who spent the first hour or so fortifying themselves on cheap organic food, info stalls, speeches by George Monbiot, Alan Simpson MP and cookery writer Lynda Brown—and of course music from Seize the Day. In a little while, all these people—from the most liberal to the most hard-core—would perform an act of united spontaneity. No conspiring, no retiring liberals—just the recognition by everyone there that there was only one thing to do—and it wasn't holding hands.

When the talking was over, the crowd transformed itself into an unforgettable army in white. Within minutes of arriving at the edge of the field, middle-Englanders and anarchists alike (indistinguishable from each other in their 'paper armour') ploughed into the crop—a 700-strong demolition crew.

In the sweltering heat, flag poles, scarecrows, space hoppers and placards became tools to trash the triffids—breaking stalks, flattening huge swathes of genetically modified crop, ripping plants whole out of the sundried soil. When we first stormed the field, there was barely a cop in evidence—apart from police cameramen vainly snapping pictures of hundreds of identical white suits and masks. Later on, snatch squads bumbled in and bumbled out (usually without a snatch) proving mainly that coppers' boots are better than most at smashing crops!

By four o'clock about half of us remained on the field and we slowly made our way out, keeping those not in suits towards the middle of the group so they wouldn't get picked off. It is imperative to wear a white suit on this kind of action unless you want to be a sitting duck. I saw two unmasked people snatched who weren't even on the field!.

As this last group made its way up the road to the 'reception' field, the police closed in for their usual last-minute muscle-flexing session, joined by horses and riot cops fresh from twatting people at the Hillgrove Farm cat demo. They made six arrests in total; 4 charged with criminal damage, 1 with obstruction and damage to a police vehicle and the last with violent disorder. There were enough people there to have de-arrested everyone, but it didn't happen.

At 6 o'clock, everyone climbed back into their coaches. That night the sun went down on another farm scale test site, the 3rd of seven to bite the dust…

Digging for Victory

△ Test sites destroyed in 1997. (4)

Test sites destroyed in 1998. (32)

X Test sites destroyed in 1999. (35 so far!)

Police surveillance car burns at test site!

GM soya imports contaminated at Liverpool docks.

Test sites occupied by crop squats.

GM show crops trashed at agricultural fairs.



As of July, more than a third of all test sites have been trashed. So don't get despondent, there's plenty left for you.



‘My First... Genetic Crop Trashing’

Actions on genetics test sites were increasing and our group thought it was high time we took part. I’d taken part in riskier actions before and ones involving more damage, but walking to the meet up point I still felt a pang of misapprehension. I met up with my friends and after waiting for someone who was (as usual) horrendously late, we set off.

Bundled as we were, five in the back of a pretty small car, I worried about whether we’d get stopped for simply being overloaded. Then I worried about not having a mask (which I quickly improvised by ripping off my long johns below the knee). I worried when a cop car behind us started flashing its lights motioning for the car, behind us, to pull over. Thankfully after about quarter of an hour on the road the little voice in my head saying *‘this is madness’* became less audible. If you've never been involved in risky direct action then you may have a view of those of us who do it as ‘brave and courageous’. The reality is everyone gets scared—you just learn to ignore the nagging voice in your head. Experience pushes up the threshold so that you find it easier and easier to silence that voice in riskier and riskier situations. In truth it’s only our fear that holds us back.

After about half an hour in the car, yabbering with my mates, the feelings of misapprehension turned into ones of anticipation. The adrenalin started to rise.

Halfway to the target site we met up with another van full. We didn’t know everyone but we trusted those we did to bring only sensible accomplices. We still had a few hours of driving ahead of us so those of us in the back went to sleep. Awoken from our dreams with the news that we were fifteen minutes away from the target we gobbled some chocolate and psyched ourselves up.

One of us had recced the site out beforehand so despite the rather vague grid refernces on the government register we knew exactly where to go. Our car drove past the field first to check it out. All seemed quiet. We parked up a nearby lane and our ragged looking army piled out. We stretched our legs and went to sit behind a hedge—waiting a while for our eyes to grow accustomed to the darkness. Someone started nattering and was answered by the first of many shushes. After about ten minutes, we started trudging through the fields. Walking along the side of the hedgerow, we ducked down so that any cars passing on the (now deserted) country road would not see us. Antipation, anticipation…

A few fields and a lot of shushes later, we arrived at the target—a test site of genetically engineered wheat. Silently we got to work trashing the crop. We all had different techniques—some edged forward kneeling on the ground and breaking armfulls of wheat—methodical but slow. Others simply trampled the crop, while some munched a path through the experiment with gardening shears. A house was in sight, but we were all dressed head to toe in black and it being late, we hoped the inhabitants were wrapped up in bed.

As we had given ourselves half an hour to ‘carry out our mission’, we checked our watches regularly. After what seemed like twenty minutes I looked at my watch only to find we had only been there for eight. It had rained all day so the wheat was wet and soon we were all soaking. We didn’t care—the adrenaline was rushing. Our faces were sombre and we were concentrating on the job at hand. Suddenly the halogen security lights on the house came on—





shining with surprising force directly onto us. After a moment of panic we realised they'd probably just been set off by a fox or something and we got back to our work. Soon afterwards the lights blinked off. After quarter of an hour boredom was setting in—then someone realised that the crop would be destroyed quicker if we all lay down in a line and rolled over it. As we all rolled around bumping into each other the sober faces tuned to maniacal grins. Apart from swimming I challenge anyone to find a quicker way to get soaked than rolling around wet fields in the rain. It was truly great.

Time was running out and so we sped up our rolling. This induced lots of dizziness, maybe not the best thing to happen on an action you may need to run away from at any time. It was at this point that a car drove past. It's headlights reached out towards us but thankfully we remained in the pitch dark. What a surreal sight would have greeted the driver if his headlights hadn't been so dirty. As we came to the end of our 'mission time' every minute seemed to go quicker. By now it was pouring and we were all pretty weary but a third of the crop was still intact. Breaking our own (sensible) rule we stayed ten minutes extra. The tension had really built by now and mixed with a bit of action hysteria every sound of a distant car brought worried expressions.

We finished off the crop and happy but tired from our manic work we trudged back to our vehicles. Walking bent over, once again a sudden rash of cars drove past—oblivious to our little tribe five feet away on the other side of the hedge—we hoped. Just as we got to the car someone realised they'd left a pair of shears—with their fingerprints on—in the middle of the field. (Always wear gloves!). After a moment of worry we realised another one of us had picked it up—phew!

Driving off, our different vehicles in different directions, we remained tense until we were around ten miles away. Then the smiles and giggling started. Chaos erupted in the back as we took off our top layer of clothes—bought the previous day from a charity shop. We changed shoes chucking the cheap trainers we had bought for the occasion in a bin liner with the clothes and tools. We drove into a town and dumped it all in a skip. We stopped at a phonebox and rang up the van's mobile to see if they were all right—they were. With no evidence of our crimes on us and entering a different county we all felt pretty pleased with ourselves. We got out the chocolate biscuits and put on some loud music. Too buzzing to sleep we chattered about future plans and took the piss out of each other for being too jumpy. In the early hours of the morning I was dropped off at home. A contented sleep followed.

The sabotage was both successful and fun. It was one of the first actions our affinity group had done and therefore unsurprisingly we made a few mistakes. Mistakes we've learnt from. Having done a few more site trashings, we've refined better techniques. The biggest mistake we made was leaving our vehicles in a nearby layby. Their number plates if spotted would have led the cops right to our doorsteps. In subsequent actions we've been dropped off by the drivers, meeting them again at a prearranged pickup point and time. For this reason we have not overstayed our 'mission time' again even if it has meant not entirely finishing the crop.

Trashing genetic test sites has really helped our group. New activists are now expeirenced and willing to go on, and organise, more actions. Activists who have been around for a while have also been reempowered.

From the looks of things more and more sites are being destroyed so there must be a lot of you feeling the same thing as us. Despite the mistakes we made the memory of 'My First...Genetic Test Trashing' will always make me smile.

Good luck to you all, especially those of you with night time harvests!

For info on trashing crops see 'A Gardener's Guide' on page 318





The Peasants are Revolting… in France

On June the 22nd 1999 in a combined operation in four towns, police arrested several militants of the *Confederation Paysanne* (CP). Earlier in June they'd taken part in a joint action with the visiting Indian peasants of the ICC (see page 97), destroying genetic rice experiments at a research facility in Montpelier. Funded by the multinational AGR-EVO the experiments were aiming to create varieties resistant to its glufosinate-based weed killer. The new varieties are to be grown both in the Third World and in the French Carmargue. Their sabotage, for which they still await a court date, was only the most recent confrontation in an impressive wave of anti-GM direct action carried out in France by the CP.

The CP is 20,000 strong and its farm labourer and peasant members are renowned for radicalism and the militancy of their actions. In the last two years they have destroyed twenty genetic crop sites as well as attacking laboratories and holding demonstrations all over France. Below we reprint two statements, one from a CP member in court and another from the popular assembly of the Jussieu unemployed centre occupation. The occupation was part of an effective campaign of action which succeeded in halting the introduction of the French JSA/New Deal. Hundreds from the unemployed movement blockaded the court where the CP members were on trial, impressively weaving the two struggles together. All three defendants were given suspended sentences and ordered to pay 500,000 francs compensation to Novartis. The defendants have refused to pay and Novartis has backed down fearing bad publicity.

"On Jan 8, '98, 200 members of the Confederation Paysanne, reacting against the government decision to authorise the use of bio-engineered corn in France, broke into the Novartis Seed Company warehouse in southwest France where this corn was stored, 'ripped open the sacks and drenched the corn with a firehose' (Le Monde, Jan 19)

The unemployed movement cannot fail to see a close connection between this exemplary act and its own actions. The market relations that are tending to exclude the majority of people from all power over their own lives are the same relations that are causing a constantly increasing degradation of the most basic conditions of survival by the blatant ravaging of nature and the widespread poisoning of the population. Capitalism has become so suicidal that each new step in the direction of 'Progress' is another step toward catastrophe. The scale and range of disasters



French peasants destroy Monsanto GM crop

and the threat of their worsening make it a life-and-death matter to call in to question the very nature of a society dominated by commodity relations. Merely to survive, we are ALL forced to undertake a radical transformation of this society."

"Three members of the Farmers Confederation have been indicted for their role in this action. We intent to support them with all the means at our disposal' -Jussieu Assembly Statement (Jan 21)

"The techniques of domination are developing so rapidly… that anyone who doesn't happen to be in the ruling circles is confronted with the question: Is it still possible to make the truth heard when so many political and economic powers are in league to cover it up? How, amid a population that has been turned into deaf-mute spectators, can we thwart the schemes that the merchants and their lackeys feel free to hatch in broad daylight, knowing that, whether they are right or wrong, no one is in a position to contradict them? Under such conditions, how can we deal with emergencies? Faced with Novartis's bio-engineered corn, my comrades and I felt it was urgent to act before it was too late. In joining us at this first ever public trial of a bio-engineering plant, the joyous and resolute crowd outside [1,800 strong], whose shouts can be heard even here in the courtroom this afternoon, clearly aims at the same time to put on trial a social order that doesn't shrink from announcing that it considers it acceptable to risk poisoning humanity and the entire planet in the name of progress…"
-Rene Riesel Statement to the Agen Court (Feb 3)

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Loonies Let Loose in Linconshire

Picture this... it was the hottest day of 1999, and somewhere in Lincolnshire a convoy of 15 vehicles drew to a halt opposite a seven acre field of maize. A hundred white-suited people with masks and gloves piled out of vans. For an hour and a quarter they systematically decimated the rows of ripening genetically-modified crops--completely unimpeded by the police!

Despite the recent spate of crop-trashings (including the destruction of 3 of the 7 farm scale trials) and the fact that the *Smash Genetic Engineering* Action had been flagged up in the mainstream media the week before, the AgrEvo farm scale site at Spittle in the Street, Lincolnshire was completely undefended.

The first people to attempt to intervene were the farmer and his daughter, who strolled over and took holiday snaps of the anonymous, masked invaders, whilst claiming that the site was not in fact GM (a lie that was later repeated in the press). As people continued to destroy the crop they retreated to the nearby roadside and had animated conversations with a bemused and lonely copper.

After over an hour of pulling, stamping and snapping, around half the crop was destroyed and the absence of police was becoming rather marked. It seemed like a good time to leave... As people gathered to leave the area, an air horn was sounded to make sure no one was left stranded in the head high maize. Affinity groups checked all were present and correct and everyone moved off—unfortunately lacking an appropriate sense of urgency...

Sometime later, in a wheat field nearby, a motley six van loads of police (unceremoniously dragged back on duty from the far corners of Lincolnshire) apprehended a crowd of white-clad individuals trying to cross a road. Fifty or so identically clad individuals were seen running through the woods, while around thirty people linked arms and attempted to resist arrest. Affinity groups were lost in the melee and police moved in and picked people off. Remarkably, as police held people down, a number broke free, rolled through ditches of stinging nettles and followed a bizarre trail of abandoned clothing through the woods.

Lincolnshire constabulary were ludicrously unprepared for the 30 arrestees who were taken to stations across the county. White suits, masks and gloves mysteriously disappeared *en-route* and as if this was not enough, showers and toothbrushes provided by the police quickly washed away any possibility of forensic evidence.

Meanwhile back on the other side of the woods... a succession of daring escapes were underway. Vans massing to collect the escapees were blocked into a field by irate farmers, and rather than just sit and wait for the cops, some spectacular getaway driving ensued. All that was needed was a backing track to complement the sight of various coloured vans speeding through ajoining wheatfields and across ditches to the relative saftey of the open road.

Not all were so lucky, however, and a number of vehicles ended up overheated and abandoned in the fields with occupants either arrested or legging it on foot out of the area. Tales have continued to abound of people hiding in potato fields 'til moonrise then skulking away, and hitching home!

By Saturday evening the police had upwards of 40 people (and a number of vehicles) taken under arrest from a variety of locations. Interviewing all those arrested should not have taken long given that everyone said "no comment", but it was not until the Sunday evening that the news came in that people were being charged with conspiracy to commit criminal damage and held until court on Monday.

The action and arrests were clearly being treated as political. 'Conspiracy' is used as a catch-all charge. In this case it allowed the cops to link people arrested at different times and places to an offence for which they appear to have insufficient evidence.

Forty-six arrests, and the legal wrangles that inevitably follow are certainly not to be taken lightly. However, to say that the action was a failure on the basis of the large number of arrests plays into the hands of the State in the same way as believing their lies that the site was not GM. (The site was lab tested and found to be genetically modified, and the farm is listed as hosting test sites.)

It should be remembered that in the middle of a Saturday afternoon, 100 people converged on and destroyed a strategic farm-scale trial. The action was openly publicised and yet managed to catch the police completely unprepared and unawares. This fact was immensely empowering during the action, and gives fantastic scope for the future organisation of our actions. Certainly mistakes were made and lessons should be learnt, but there were many positive aspects too. Perhaps a *Smash More Genetic Engineering* Action could address some of these...!

It All Began On Mayday...

The First Year of Tyneside Action for People and Planet



Decontamination of the Edge House Farm GMO oilseed rape field in Summer 1998

In Newcastle 1998 didn't look like being a very good year for revolutionary eco-warriors. The Tyneside Anarchist Group (TAG) had stopped meeting, the radical Alleycat Books Co-op had closed down and the animal rights group had fallen apart due to paranoia and in-fighting.

But there were still a few dodgy individuals around who wanted to do some 'Reclaim Mayday' activities as TAG had done in previous years. So a small group of leftovers from the Cradlewell Bypass road-protest, Alleycat, the animal rights group, the Green Party and the University Green and Peace Action Societies met to discuss what they fancied doing. A solidarity action for the Darlington Magnet Strikers was planned, and we made a huge banner reading 'Sacked Magnet Workers - Sold Down the River', which we draped over the Tyne Bridge.

As we were planning this Mayday action it was announced that a European Agriculture summit was to take place in Durham and Newcastle during May. The genetics issue had been quietly beginning to raise its ugly mutated head, and a Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) test site had recently been announced on Edge House Farm near Ponteland. People in the Reclaim Mayday group figured that if we were meeting to plan one action, we may as well plan several, and so a week of action against the genetics threat was declared.

First we held a public meeting below our favourite pub. This attracted a damn good crowd through word-of-mouth and posters. Some local Greenpeace folk explained the ins-and-outs of genetic engineering and the May actions were announced and support gathered for them. We decided on a name for ourselves; Gene-No! (taken from an old Dexy's Midnight Runners song), and before taking action we raised awareness with information stalls in town.

At the summit in Durham, the agriculture ministers were seated round a lawn beneath the Cathedral expecting to see a nice military band play. Instead they got a gaggle of face-painted weirdos storming the field supported by some local kids and wielding 'Stop the Genetix Experiment' flags. We were rugby-tackled by plain-clothes security and five people were bundled into a police van, later to be released without charge. Undaunted and buzzing from adrenaline the next day we held a well-received check-out blockade at a Prestos supermarket.

After that the agriculture ministers were meeting at Newcastle Civic Centre so we organised a noisy party to greet them. Meanwhile round the back a commando-style squad of nutters were seen running up with a very long ladder. Three lasses climbed onto the roof and D-locked themselves on with a banner for the arriving delegates to see. Arrests followed but so far we've had a 100% success rate on charges being dropped against Gene-No!

The week wasn't over yet. We hired a coach for people, dressed up in white suits, and with giant fish and tomato costumes went to go and inspect



The International Centre For Lies



The International Centre for Life (ICFL) is a high profile £50 million lottery funded project based in Newcastle. It's composed of three main parts:

- The Helix visitor attraction. This turns genetic engineering into a Disney exhibit, hiding the important questions and selling the message 'Isn't DNA wonderful, let's celebrate progress!'
- Newcastle University's expanded Genetics Institute.
- The Bioscience Wing, filled with commercial biotechnology companies.

There is also a 'superlab' where schoolchildren are indoctrinated by the businesses themselves. The ICFL basically mixes business and science in a way that places our bodies and futures under the increasing control of the corporate state.

Focussing mainly on awareness raising stunts Gene No! has charted its own independent course alongside the TAPP adventure. It was excluded from the ICFL's first public conference 'Making Biotechnology Happen' in February 1999. After this Gene No! linked up with Disability Action North East (DANE) to picket it. Due to the visual protest and the press interest it attracted, it forced the ICFL to allow two speakers from Gene No! in to make a five minute response to Monsanto's 'Feeding the World through Biotechnology' talk.

Due to occurences like this, and the executives being well trained in the 'good cop' tactic of trying to contain, co-opt and stiffle dissent, the ICFL has proved a most complicated target, stimulating debate on co-option and the right strategies for the group to use. An information pack on the ICFL is available from Gene No! For a copy send a large SAE to Gene No! at: c/o PO Box 1TA, Newcastle, NE99 1TA, UK.

Monsanto's herbicide-resistant oil seed rape out near Ponteland. We then saw the ministers off at the hotel where they were meeting, with one protester being arrested after infiltrating the conference and questioning whether the canteen food was genetically modified. The May week of action was great fun, and it served to bond the new group together by opposing the evil state-capitalist forces together.

Later in the summer, the Edge House Farm crop was 'decontaminated' by concerned locals who took the collected GMO plants to the Environment Agency to be destroyed as 'hazardous waste'. As a result of this and the decontamination of all other Northumberland GM fields, Edge House Farm decided to cancel growing GM crops.

Forming Our Group Identity

After the anti-genetics week was over, we didn't want to stop doing things together. After such a Newcastle lull it felt good to be in a group of people who were willing to act on their beliefs, and could work together with respect and real friendship. So we did a couple of actions not on the genetics theme. We protested against the blocking of the Keelman's Way cycle route, picketed the Countryside Alliance Annual General Meeting (AGM) and blockaded the regional Shell depot on the anniversary of Ken Saro-Wiwa's execution. However we were still a little bit unsure of what we wanted out of the group and so we had a meeting where everyone could discuss their aims and dreams.

We discussed what our aims should be—and even whether we actually needed them, as maybe the aims were determined by each issue. Our principles are held individually by each of us, but as far as group principles go, we're decided that we're non-authoritarian, non-coercive and non-hierarchical. And that's it. But what's the point of the group? Were we a mix of representatives of different campaigning groups, or a separate activist group? Do we back up existing campaigns or create new ones? Well, we felt there's no necessary difference. If, for example, Tynebikes got organised, we'd support them. It's the energy of individuals committed to their causes that gets us activated. The rest of us join in.

We had a competition to choose our name. Some of us felt we were an Earth First! group whilst others preferred a more inclusive name without the macho connotations of (American) EF! In the end it was agreed that in order to be able to draw more people in, we needed a name to identify ourselves with. We



settled for *Tyneside Action for People and Planet* (TAPP for short) and became a weekly forum in which different environmental/social justice campaigners could meet.

At a later meeting we described ourselves as an awareness-raising non-violent direct action group, and in order to be allowed to use an office-space in the city, we defined certain limits on our activities. These included; respect for individuals, no physical violence and no harm to people or planet. However we've got no set rules or policies, and in fact TAPP doesn't really exist outside the weekly meeting.

Early on, we decided to try and reach out to all the other campaigning groups in the area. We first held a pretty dismal meeting with the anti-nuclear groups, where common ground for action was not reached.

Next we had a slightly more successful 'activists' meeting in September 1998, where we brought together all kinds of folk from more conventional campaigning groups and environmental projects. Our most ambitious event, however, was our most successful. That same September TAPP joined with other (permaculture and solutions-based) environmental groups to hold a weekend of discussion, inspiration and direct action training. It was named Gathering Visions Gathering Strength (GVGS) after the national conference that some TAPPers had attended and been inspired by.

Not only did it get many new people involved but it demonstrated the amount of knowledge and skills we had between us, and proved an amazingly enjoyable bonding experience. I feel this weekend saw TAPP come of age, and soon afterwards we were having up to 25 people in meetings.

New Action Groups Set Up

The TAPP forum quickly spawned issue-specific groups like Tyneside Action on Nuclear Convoys (TANC) and Tyneside Action on Transport (TAT) to do the acting whilst TAPP did the talking. Convoys of trucks carrying leaky Trident warheads up and down the country regularly go past Newcastle. TANC got together to pounce on these and hold them up, raising awareness by leafletting the people in the cars jammed in the traffic.

Meanwhile those with a bent for bikes had formed TAT and were holding monthly Critical Mass-style 'Safer City Street Parties' throughout town. As winter drew on, the costumes got sillier and our energy levels dropped, so we called it a day when we found ourselves dressed as Santas and snowmen stomping through the city streets.

How The Group Works

After our GVGS weekend TAPP had reached a critical mass whereby if you planned an action, you'd know you'd get enough support to do it well. How we managed to create a healthy group is hard to pin down—perhaps it's just because we're new and fresh. Certainly at the beginning we were lucky in that it felt that there was nothing happening before we got together, so we could start from a clean slate and create something small, but cool! There was space within the meetings to discuss everything we fancied doing, and we were very chuffed to find common souls to work with. Now things have changed and expectations have been raised.

We have made conscious efforts to share our skills around, from doing good press-releases to facilitating meetings. I can't say we've had a complete success however, and within the group certain hierarchies of knowledge, skill and experience have persisted. Nevertheless, we try to be open and reflexive enough to guard against such hierarchies becoming too entrenched, and most agree that the TAPP forum has proven to be a welcoming and democratic space.

'Key members' have taken months out and so nobody has come to feel too indispensable. (We don't really have any 'full-time' activists in Newcastle so it was early on accepted that everyone needed time out to have lives.) Many participants have had experience of more dysfunctional groups, and keep the communication flowing, and us aware of the pitfalls and dangers they have seen in other groups. Individuals have also been pretty determined at keeping personal disagreements separate from getting things done.

How We Do An Action

In a meeting, someone will raise an issue or an event which they feel is important—maybe the anniversary of Indonesia's invasion of East Timor, the proposed felling of some trees for road widening, or the visit to Newcastle of some arch-demon like Eddie George (Bank of England boss who said unemployment in the North is good for the economy). People will make enthusiastic noises if it grabs them, and maybe help the initiator to find out more for the next meeting. Then they'll propose an action related to the issue, we'll sort out a suitable date, chase up the materials we need, and assign roles like press releases and checking the legal situation. We'll meet up on the day, together with other interested parties we've contacted, do our blockading, leafletting or whatever



stunt we fancy. If the press are there we'll chat to them, get some photos and try and embarrass our target as much as possible. If the police turn up to play, we'll either face them off or avoid arrest by doing what they say—ideally in our own time and on our own terms. If there are arrests, someone will wait for the naughty law-breakers to be released. And often as not we'll spend the rest of the day in the pub.

Transcending Protest

We've tried to use the group to do something more than protest however. We made nice photo-posters about local direct action to go in peoples loos, we researched and put together a booklet about historical radicalism and resistance on Tyneside and we joined together to put in mass food orders. We also shared computer login codes, dog-sat, got allotments together, had mass orgies... oh no, that was just a dream. Oh well, I feel safe in saying that taking collective direct action has enhanced our sad little lives and given us back as much as we put in. And it's dead easy to create something extra from protest — TAPP recommends it!

Debates We've Had

We have quite good arguments in the pub sometimes. As perhaps an unusually diverse bunch (ages, backgrounds, lifestyles, faiths, ideologies, dress-sense, hairstyles, taste in music—is Bruce Springsteen a god or not?), we can't help but tolerate each other's peculiarities. Issues discussed have included; the welfare state—defend it or let it die?, support people wanting jobs or encourage them to drop out? using violent language or images, being 'reasonable' critics or chucking rotten tomatoes, working with the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) against the war or refusing to deal with them, being public about something or keeping it hush-hush, how to attack the consumer lifestyle without pissing people off, christianity and spirituality, having waffly meetings or being a fascist facilitator, gobby people dominating meetings, individuals taking too much on, how to get new or shy people activated, whether to try and kick-start other groups into action or just do our thing and of course, the usual jostling of causes and priorities.

Use Of The Earth First! Network

Our group formed spontaneously from the need of North East activists to join together. A handful of members had previously done EF! stuff but others didn't even know what EF! was and we basically formed outside of that network. Much of what drives us does not easily fit into the standard Earth First! ideology—we're our own distinct group. When seven of us travelled down to the EF! Winter Moot in January 1999 it was the first time that we as a group had encountered EF! properly. We found a network that presented itself as being in crisis and we went away feeling happy that our little group was free of the stresses and strains of those more established. We heard groups vow never to use the media again, but we were finding both TV and press vitally important in carrying our message across to people. We thought about how we'd deal with 'problem people' and felt we'd so far skillfully avoided everyone locally we wanted to avoid and that we communicated between ourselves enough that we could deal with potential problems. We were baffled by the elaborate facilitation strategies needed to co-ordinate such large numbers of people. But we've gained from the sharing of experiences, like burn-out and accidental elitism. Now we're pretty well networked in with EF! and other national circuits, and we find it really funny that we've acquired a reputation as a 'sorted' group—cheers!

More Recent Developments...

Radical activities and campaigns in the North East this year have outgrown TAPP, and it is now only one node in a diversified network. But TAPP played a very useful role as an initial catalyst-group for submerged networks to get going again. I'll not list the active groups in Newcastle now, officer, but it's all changed in the last few months, with more going on than I can keep track of.

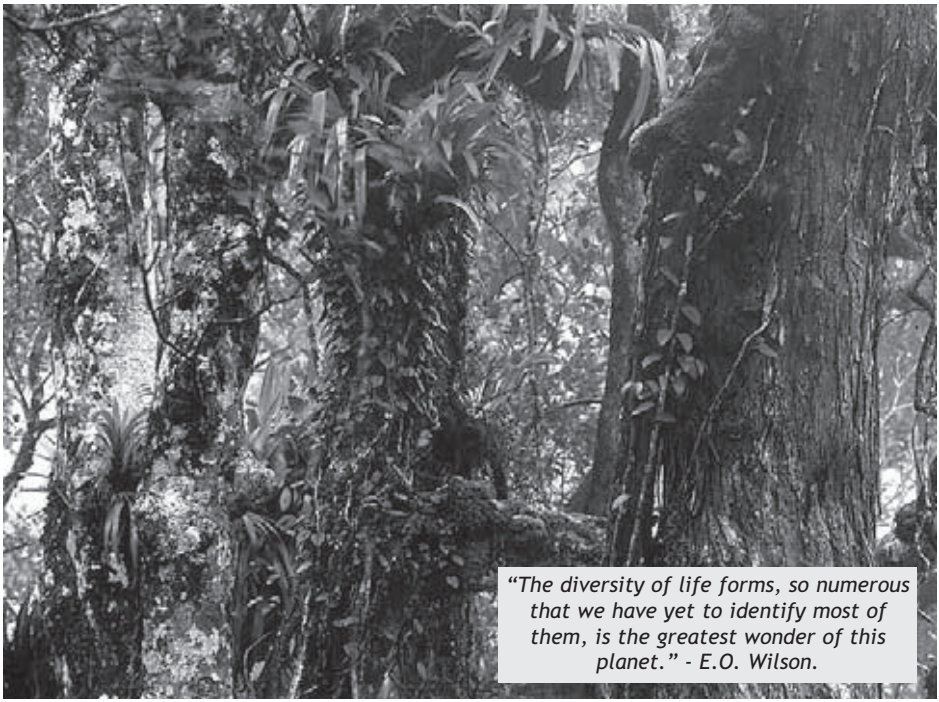
Last week there was a blinding West End house party with three rooms of DJ's backed by huge Reclaim The Streets and 'Take Action' banners, the Toon is covered in stickers and posters of all types, from June 18 to anti-Asylum bill, the police regularly ask after us and there's way too many meetings to go to each week!

Perhaps the most positive and life-giving development for us has been our growing involvement with artists, musicians and other creatively green people. And all this while the *Think Globally Act Locally* newsletter, which was going long before TAPP formed, has provided monthly coverage of local protest activities and issues, with a rotating editorship and an inclusive line keeping it on-the-ball.

To contact TAPP, and for a copy of *Think Globally Act Locally*, send some stamps to: PO Box 1TA, Newcastle, NE99 1TA, UK.

Biodiversity And Its Loss...

What Does It All Really Mean?



"The diversity of life forms, so numerous that we have yet to identify most of them, is the greatest wonder of this planet." - E.O. Wilson.

The word *biodiversity* beautifully and succinctly captures a fundamental idea: life on earth is extraordinarily diverse and complex. However biodiversity is a commonly used and misused term in EF! circles and others. In a speech to the Royal Geographical Society last year, John Prescott, Minister for Environment, used the work biodiversity 11 times. Afterwards he was askedwhat the word meant, and he candidly said, "I don't really know." Below I discuss what biodiversity means, who we share our planet with, what are the prime reasons for biodiversity loss, the purported reasons for conserving biodiversity, their philosophical underpinnings (highlighting those that fit in to a revolutionary political agenda) and finally sketch some possible future scenarios for us and our fellow life-forms on earth.

Say the word biodiversity and it conjures many images, perhaps positive: a majestic beech woodland, a bird of prey gliding the thermals, a steamy tropical rainforest teeming with life—perhaps negative; caged birds to be smuggled for the pet industry, the razed ground of a woodland once occupied by activists, fire ripping through a tropical rainforest. I hope most readers had positive images, as biodiversity literally means the diversity of life, with no connotations of oppression and/or destruction. Beyond the obvious—a contraction of the words biological diversity—the word in scientific circles means the diversity of life in all its forms, and at all levels of organisation. The 'all its forms' bit reminds us that biodiversity includes plants, fungi, bacteria, other micro-organisms, invertebrate animals (like insects and worms), vertebrates (literally animals with backbones) like birds, and mammals including you and I. The idea of levels of organisation of life is a little more complicated, but essentially there are three major levels, genetic, organismal (or species) and ecological diversity, which are discussed below (see *Table 1*).

Unlike most new scientific terms the word biodiversity has entered the accepted vocabularies of science, the media, mainstream politics, radical politics and the public at large. The word biodiversity arose in the context of, and has remained wedded to, con-



cerns over the loss of the natural world and its inhabitants. Environmental destruction is so evident, to so many, with so much information arriving that things are spiraling downwards that this new, complex, scientific term has been widely adopted by disparate groups—all with their own spin on what biodiversity is and means.

Organismal Diversity

I am an organism, as are you, as are trees and birds; organisms are units of life. Therefore despite the unusual word, organismal diversity is the diversity of these units of life. All these units of life that are very similar are grouped into species, like us and our fellow humans, or carrots, or oranges etc. This level of the organisation of life generally receives the most attention. People commonly want to know the number of specific types of organism, like sycamore trees, or potato plants, or common sparrows—asking questions such as: how many bird species are there in a piece of woodland? Being able to identify species, while sometimes difficult, is an important base-line for our understanding of our surroundings, as James Lovelock, scientist and originator of the Gaia hypothesis put it; "We are so alienated from the world of nature that few of us can name the wild flowers or insects of our locality or notice the rapidity of their extinction."

Scientists use a system of two words written in Latin to name each species. First is one word to describe the general grouping called the genus, the second the exact type called the species. This allows people around the world to know exactly what is being discussed: *Quercus velutina*, black oak, is different from *Quercus alba*, white oak, but are both oaks and are similar enough to share the same genus. However attempts to classify the natural world are more complex than most people realise. Perhaps the most common definition of a species is groups that are, or are potentially, interbreeding natural populations. Or more simply, if the individuals can mate and produce offspring then they are of the same species. Many people classify European and North American brown bears as the same species, even though they have been separated for over 10,000 years, and don't travel from Romania to Canada to have sex! Or what about gray wolves and coyotes in the US—they occasionally interbreed (possibly producing rare red wolves), so are they really the same species? The situation gets far messier with plants where it has been estimated that 70% of flowering plants owe their origins to the process of different species getting together producing new hybrid species. There are now at least 7 different concepts that address what a species is. Nature, as usual, foils attempts to be neatly catagorised into ordered boxes!

Table 1 Elements of biodiversity. (After Heywood & Baste 1995.)

Ecological diversity	Genetic diversity	Organismal diversity
Biomes		Kingdoms
Bioregions		Phyla
Landscapes		Families
Ecosystems		Genera
Habitats		Species
Niches		Subspecies
Populations	Populations	Populations
	Individuals	Individuals
	Chromosomes	
	Genes	
	Nucleotides	

What is sure is that regardless of the woolly bits around what is a species, there are lots of them out there in the world. How many species are there on Earth? Obviously the best way to find out would be to go out and count them. Unfortunately this is easier said than done, due to the low political priority making funds and training scarce. To date approximately 1.8 million species have been described, and even this figure is a best guess as there is no central register to compile new species names (ecological science is very decentralised!). The actual number of species we share the planet with could be anywhere between 3.6 and 111 million species, with a current knowledge best guess being about 13.6 million different species on Earth (see *Table 2*). The problems of trying to estimate species numbers without the time and staff to do extensive collections is extreme-

A Brief History Of Life...

The first multicellular organisms appeared on Earth about 4,500 million years ago. Organisms began to colonise the land about 440 million years ago. By 290 million years ago the dinosaurs had flourished and died out. At 250 million years ago mammals appeared. Humans arrived on the scene 1.8 million years ago. On average a species lasts 1 to 10 million years before extinction. The number of species on the planet has varied tremendously over the past few hundred million years. The general pattern has been an increase in the number of species, as rates of speciation have exceeded extinction. However at 5 points throughout this time period there have been mass-extinction's. We are currently in the middle of the sixth wave of extinction—for the first time caused by humans.



ly complex, with several methods available, which are not addressed here (see *Further Reading* list at the end of this article for details). However, as *Table 1* shows, species are one part of a hierarchy of classifying the full range of the diversity of life, from Kingdoms, down to species, to populations of individuals, to each individuals genetic makeup.

Ecological Diversity

It is easy to define an ecosystem conceptually: it is a group of interacting organisms (often called a community) and the physical environment they inhabit at a given point in time. Flying over the countryside in an airplane you see these ecosystems—blue patches and ribbons that are lakes and rivers, dark green patches of woodland, and so on. While easily seen from the air, to decide where one ecosystem finishes and another starts is a fools goal—the web of interactions does not have clean breaks. Where exactly does the lake edge end and the land begin? A second problem in distinguishing ecosystems is that ecologists think about ecosystems at different scales in space. A pool of water that collects in a hollow of a large tree is home to some algae and small invertebrates, and for the inhabitants can be considered an ecosystem. But when an ecologist concerned with grizzly bears talks of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem they are referring to 50,000 km^2—enough habitat for a grizzly bear population! Again nature defies to be put into neat little boxes. The key to understanding the ecosystem concept is that it is a human construct to help us organise our understanding of ecological phenomena and communicate it. So when you hear someone talk about a woodland ecosystem, get them to be more specific—what other ecosystems might it contain?

Even when we decide how to delineate a set of ecosystems, we then have the great problem of classifying them into different types. How different do two areas have to be to classified as different, given that all ecosystems are unique, given their unique history and different population levels of each species? There is no standardised method for distinguishing ecosystems. For example, one person's tropical rain forest, is another's lowland tropical moist forest, is another persons evergreen tropical wet forest. A useful approach has been to employ a hierarchy, firstly separate land (terrestrial) from aquatic, then aquatics into freshwater and marine etc.. Other methods often involve classifying climate, geology or land form (e.g.: mountainous). Again if someone talks about a woodland ecosystem, get them to be more specific about what they mean—what soil type is it on, common or rare, which species are common?

Genetic Diversity

At the smallest end of the scale of levels of the organisation of life is genetic diversity. In short, the diversity of life is fundamentally genetic. There is a functional hierarchy from the blueprint of life, DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) to the organism we see, say a toucan or a fern. Genes consist of DNA connected onto long chains called chromosomes. These genes code for specific proteins that form the basis of cells, and thus whole organisms. At any of these levels we can look for genetic variation, for example, between two populations of different species or variation between two populations of the same species, or variation within a single population of a single species.

Genetic diversity is fundamental to the survival of all species. Imagine if human genetic diversity were

Table 2 Approximate numbers of described species (in thousands) currently recognized and estimates of possible species richness for groups with more than 20 000 described species and/or estimated to include in excess of 100 000 species. The reliability of all estimates is likely to vary greatly. (After Hawksworth and Kalin-Arroyo 1995.)

		Number of estimated species			
	Described species	High	Low	Working figure	Accuracy of working figure
Viruses	4	1000	50	400	Very poor
Bacteria	4	3000	50	1000	Very poor
Fungi	72	2700	200	1500	Moderate
'Protozoa'	40	200	60	200	Very poor
'Algae'	40	1000	150	400	Very poor
Plants	270	500	300	320	Good
Nematodes	25	1000	100	400	Poor
Arthropods					
Crustaceans	40	200	75	150	Moderate
Arachnids	75	1000	300	750	Moderate
Insects	950	100 000	2000	8000	Moderate
Molluscs	70	200	100	200	Moderate
Chordates	45	55	50	50	Good
[Others	115	800	200	250	Moderate]
Totals	1750	111 655	3635	13 620	Very poor



eroded losing our Y chromosome—there would be no men left. Humans are all different, this is good, as we'd get confused and bored if we were all the same, and in common with all other species, having a diverse population allows us to collectively face the future with more certainty. Take the *HIV* virus which causes *AIDS* as an example. If this were to infect every single human on earth, the vast majority would die, but because of our genetic diversity some would be naturally immune to the effects of the *AIDS* virus, and thus future populations would have no worries about *AIDS* (as their parents would have passed on their immunity). This is the same mechanism by which insects eventually overcome pesticides in farming (and why genetically modifying foods to produce their own pesticides is not sensible) and bacteria overcome antibiotics (and why the pharmaceutical industry trying to get us to use more antibiotics is madness).

Inbreeding—mating between relatives—is one major cause of decreased genetic diversity. This happens often in species with very small population sizes, as they don't have much choice except mating with a relative. Close relatives will likely share some of their genes as they have one or more ancestors in common, and of course genetic diversity decreases, as does the survival chances of the individual due to a rapid build-up of deleterious genes (hence there are probably good evolutionary reasons why incest is a no-no).

Why Does Biodiversity Matter?

"When I am hungry, a date palm gives me food. When my belly is full, behold, the tree is beautiful."
- A Jordanian Bedouin herder and gatherer.

Life on Earth is abundant, diverse, complex and can be organised on different interlinked levels—but why does any of this matter? The short answer is, without genetic, organismal and ecological diversity reasonably intact you would be dead, as you'd have no food to eat, a radically different climate to live in etc. Try to imagine a planet where dead things did not decompose, or where plants did not replenish oxygen. At the most basic level we can form two categories as to why biodiversity is important: its use and non-use value. I'll briefly note some of the most important uses of biodiversity. However, this is to show the reader the real-world situation: a great many uses are not desirable or sustainable, but happen.

The most fundamental benefit we derive from other species with whom we share the planet is in our food. We use other species to obtain food somewhere between two extremes. At one end farming where land is completely re-engineered for the growth of food species, be it maize or cattle, and at the other collecting wild foodstuffs, where the land is relatively intact and food is taken from where it grows in nature, for example hunting wild boar or collecting fungi. Obviously from many angles obtaining foodstuffs from the collecting end of the extreme is most preferable; the ecosystem is relatively intact, most species are preserved, genetic diversity is not reduced, food is local, fresh, little transport costs, meaningful interaction with nature etc.. This is obvious, as given a free choice why do children go off blackberry picking? Why is fishing so popular? And how many of us as children went off to try and grow lines of perfectly identical vegetables? (see *Why The Rush For Farming?* box). Currently after 10,000 years of farming and a few hundred years of capitalism, we have a situation where out of about 250,000 species of flowering plants, less than 3000 are regarded as a food source, and about 200 domesticated for food while 90% of the per capita plant food supply of 146 countries is supplied by 103 plant species. In the animal world the number of species used is even more restricted.

Another major use-value of biodiversity is medicine. Extracts from organisms have been used by humans for millennia to treat illness, with millions of

Why The Rush For Farming?

In the past all foodstuffs were obtained via collecting from the wild, but for the last 10,000 years the trend has been entirely in the direction of intensive farming. It is demonstrably bad for biodiversity, as globally one-third to one-half of the earth's land surface has been transformed by humans, the biggest contribution by farming. In the UK very little ancient woodland remains, most having been cleared for farming. Why the rush for farming? Farming provided greater production rates, used in the past for local consumption, but now as marketable commodities. In a system where competitive trading is a precursor to survival who would wander in the woods when you could chop them down, sell the timber, invest the profits in stocks or more land, then grow cash commodities and let the cycle continue? Even if you did wander in the woods, the woods would probably have been stolen from you. Farming is centralising, formal and conducive to accumulating power and wealth, collecting wild foodstuffs is inherently informal, decentralised and local.



people using traditional medicines every day. The reason is simple: many species have evolved chemical defenses to protect themselves from natural enemies or to subdue prey, or survive certain conditions. These compounds are effective as they are biologically active, with properties that disrupt the physiology of the target organisms. These are the same properties utilized by medicines either as defenses against human pathogens or to alter our own physiology in some desired way. Biodiversity provides, for free, the building blocks of the lucrative pharmaceuticals industry. However only 5,000 of 250,000 species of flowering plants have been investigated as potential sources of new treatments. If these species are not there in the wild, then new or revived old medicines, whether via the local herbalist or a transnational corporation, will not become available.

A further major use of other species has been in biological control, that is using organisms to control pests, usually those that attack foodstuffs. Biological control has been very successful, but is rarely noted as once the control organisms are established, that's it, you don't need to do anything else. Also the stars of the show are not sexy, mainly nematode worms, mites and micro-organisms. For example it was a fly called *Ptychomyia remota* that ended infestations of coconut in Fiji. Of importance regarding biodiversity is the fact that these agents are usually rare and from a limited area where the pest originated from. For example the parasitoid *Epidinocarsis lopezi*, responsible for the spectacular control of the mealybug that eats cassava in Africa was eventually collected from a small number of localities in Brazil and Bolivia after extensive searches throughout Central and South America. If small chunks of nature reserves are preserved and nothing else, these useful species may be lost.

Other uses of our fellow species are non-food materials, most importantly wood, but also fibers, resins, gums, adhesives, rubber, oils and waxes, agricultural chemicals include pesticides, perfumes. Also there is a great deal of recreational use, especially for people from industrialised nations including hunting, fishing, harvesting plants for gardening, harvesting for pets and what's known as 'ecotourism'.

Non-use values of biodiversity are those uses where the organisms are not taken or used as commodities in any way, for example the benefits of ecosystem services, the intrinsic value of biodiversity, using biodiversity spiritually, for educational purposes, or leaving options open to the future.

Putting A Price On Nature's Bounty

How much is the world worth? According to some ecologically minded economists, about US$33.3 trillion dollars, that's over twice the combined GDP's of the worlds 194 countries. Basically they first agreed on a list of 17 categories of good and services provided by nature, including processes such as nitrogen fixation and resources such as crop varieties and plant-derived pharmaceuticals. They then partitioned the earth in 16 specialised environment types (biomes) and judged which serviced each biome provides, then from published estimates looked at how much it would cost to replace each service for each hectare of a given biome providing the service. It graphically shows how little emphasis is placed on life-support mechanisms by states and corporations under capitalism. Suicidally little, in fact. (See *Science* magazine, Vol. 276, page 1029, 16 May 1997).

Ecosystem services are the free benefits we get from relatively intact ecosystems, which are of incalculable value (but see *Putting A Price On Nature's Bounty* box). Where would we be without ecosystems maintaining the gaseous composition of the atmosphere, contributing to the maintenance our current climate, water recycling and purification, generating and maintaining soils, converting the essential plant nutrients nitrogen, phosphorus and sulphur into forms useable by most plants, holding soils in place and binding them, disposing of wastes, maintaining global cycles of the important elements carbon, nitrogen, phosphorous and sulphur, absorbing air pollutants? It is these free ecosystem services—the functioning of ecosystems—that enable humans to obtain the food, fiber, energy and other material needs for survival.

A second non-use value is the use of the natural world for spiritual enlightenment, or less grandly, and more commonly for spiritual uplift, the feelings produced when waking to the sound of birdsong, or seeing a red squirrel dart across a woodland (which is probably why so many people take themselves off to quiet beaches or go walking in the hills in their precious days off from paid employment). Further on from that are those who value species and perhaps ecosystems (see *Do Ecosystems Have Intrinsic Value?* box) as having intrinsic value, that is they have value in and of themselves without any reference as to whether they may be useful to us now of in the future. Biodiversity is also used for education-



al purposes—ecosystems are wonderful models for showing children and adults how everything can be connected to everything else. Biodiversity has inspired many cultural activities, for example painting, moreover much of human culture and the human experience is bound up in biodiversity—we evolved within it—however much we try to deny it and separate ourselves from it.

Do Ecosystems Have Intrinsic Value?

Does an ecosystem have intrinsic value independent of the intrinsic value of the constituent species? The issue depends on the complex and controversial question: are ecosystems tightly connected, synergistic systems of closely evolved species plus their environment, or are they merely a loose assemblage of species that happen to share similar habitat needs and end up interacting together to some degree because they are in the same place at the same time? It's the kind of question that probably has no answer, other than that it probably lies somewhere in the middle. However it does make us think about ecosystem structure. If the answer is the former, each ecosystem is evolutionarily unique and can never be replicated, and hence is easier to acknowledge its intrinsic value. If it is the later and species just live there because it's convenient, then ecosystems could, in theory, be put together from their constant parts and it's the individual species with the intrinsic value, as there's little more than a bunch of species living

Finally, the most commonly asserted non-use value has been the option for future use category, that is we should save species that may be potentially useful and as we don't know what might be useful in the future we should save lots of species. There is much to be said for this idea in principle, as it's sensible, as extinction is forever, even if it is a Bodyshop sponsored cliche, and intergenerational justice could be served here.

However the unsaid implication is that we must save things as they are free precursors to wealth and power for the elite. This leads to measures such as gene banks, where companies can get hold of genetic material to help further consolidate their position, and are of little relevance to most people, rather than areas of habitat of varying degrees of wildness near peoples homes where nature can be readily interacted with and possibly used by the community in the future.

Ways Of Seeing The Natural World

"...that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth so dieth the other; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity."

- Ecclesiastes 3:19.

Other species are used, utilised and valued in many ways, but why those ways and not others? Different people ascribe different values to the same thing, a tree is many things to many people, beauty, profit, a home for wildlife, furniture, a source of food. Also people's values change over time, and depending on their current condition, for example being hungry or full, or due to the culture they happen to live in, or over longer time-scales as our attitude to Wolves demonstrates: once reviled as evil (think of Little Red Riding Hood) now championed in ecological circles as an embodiment of wildness. As an example of cultural diversity take a look at attitudes towards rats. In most places they are considered vermin, indeed, on the Isle of Man, one must never say the word, only spell it out 'ar-ay-tee', as saying rat is bad luck. However in Nigeria they are relished as food sell for more than beef or pork, while in Brasil Yanomami Indians tuck into them regularly. In the Indian Hindu temples of goddess Bhagwati Karniji rats are fed and protected. The same goes for many other species.

Despite this cultural diversity peoples attitudes to other species and ecosystems, some academics have suggested that in western countries at least, attitudes often seem to fall around three basic sets of ethics. We should examine these groupings, seeing the potential advantages, pitfalls and practical and political fallout of adopting a certain ethical stance regarding other species. One of these stances is the Romantic-Transcendental Preservation Ethic, which in essence says that nature is a temple that is soiled by the activities of humans. It says we should commune with nature when we visit it, like it is some god. There is obviously a high priority on establishing nature reserves and parks where nature is relatively intact and that we are encouraged to visit.

This romantic ethic is the stance behind many environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs): think of their brochures full of requisite photos of the natural world and their campaigns to save virgin rainforest, or save whales in their habitats untouched by the hand of man. This stance calls for fairly pristine areas to be preserved. Perhaps it is no coincidence that only those wealthy enough to travel there



can visit pristine nature, that these wealthy people make donations to the NGOs that campaign for their wilderness, and that it provides beautiful photos to aid fundraising without having to tackle social issues as pristine areas with no or few residents are to be protected.

This deification of pristine nature first leads to voyeurism, not true interaction with nature—you visit nature not live in it. Nature is kept in a separate box from both humans and society. It can also lead to serious anti-human policies, as seen by the actions on the World-Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) and other NGOs expelling indigenous people from newly created reserves. People and nature, despite the worship, are separate, so nature is merely there to feed an anthropocentric need for voyeurism. This viewpoint offers few problems for the elite, or capitalism in general, as all efforts go into saving the most beautiful areas and species which become booming tourist attractions, and therefore pay for themselves much like any other commodity—anyone fancy seeing the lions on a private game reserve in Africa? Indeed celebrated US naturalist John Muir who used this platform for political action in the last century ended up forming the now huge NGO The Sierra Club, now embroiled in controversy about whether to join other US environmental NGOs and back racist US policy to 'protect' the US environment from immigration by Latinos. Despite the regular use of this ethic within radical ecological circles, it is, in my opinion, in no way linked to progress towards a free and ecological society. We should denounce it when it is mentioned.

A second way of seeing the natural world known as the resource conservation ethic, which essentially believes that nature consists solely of natural resources and should be used to provide the greatest good to the greatest number of people for the longest time. The idea is not to plunder the land, but to use it in a way that distributes benefits fairly and efficiently among many people. It advocates wise, judicious use so that future generations will not be short-changed. Also by recognizing aesthetics as a resource some preservation of relatively intact nature is possible (thus dealing with the romantics critiqued above). This is the dominant ethic put forward today by the government, business, the media and most scientists: they are usually at best deluding themselves, and at worst lying but this is essentially what they say. Nobody says, I will leave our grandchildren with nothing so I can make a profit now, it is all talk of cost-benefit analyses, fairness to stakeholders… In essence this is no different from the perpetual campaigning from government and business that they are there for us, and they are working hard so we can all have a better life. As obviously the elite serves, in the main, the elite, their use of the resource conservation ethic is because it best serves their interests. Both the resource conservation and romantic ethic both place nature in anthropocentric (people-centred) terms—nature offers only utility to humans, nothing more.

The final, and perhaps minority view of nature, is the Evolutionary-Ecological Land Ethic. Darwin and many others have shown that humans are but one species of many created through evolution by natural selection. If we evolved from other animals and we have intrinsic value then surely the other products of evolution have intrinsic value, regardless of their usefulness to us, runs the logic. This is effectively expressing equality in ecological terms. It implies we are part of ecosystems, not separate from them, and that we can and should interact with other species, as all species interact with others in a web of life. However, we should do this with responsibility, in a manner which recognises the intrinsic value of other species and whole ecosystems. For those who want a free, equal and ecological society this is clearly the attitude to take. This is a radical departure, not about what nature can do for us, but how do we relate with our partner in life. This forces very different questions to be asked, not merely whether to develop land as carefully or as efficiently as possible.

High Biodiversity Good And Low Biodiversity Bad? Or How To Measure Biodiversity

Is it stupid to ask what's the biodiversity of this woodland? I hope, given that biodiversity is some sum of genetic, organismal and ecological diversity, that attempting to obtain a single number for the biodiversity of somewhere is rubbish, and that those that say it is should be exposed. Species number, or richness—the total number of different species in a given area or habitat—is often used as a measure of biodiversity. When people talk about high biodiversity, they usually mean an area contains a lot of species. Measuring species number is sensible, as species are relatively easy to monitor, and the extinction of species is a major manifestation of the biodiversity crisis. By measuring species richness we also capture some of the other facets of biodiversity, as these species usually all live in the same area.

Measuring some component of biodiversity, whether ecosystems, species richness or genes, is rife with problems; from the practical, like finding the



species in the first place, to working out what species they are. But whatever the measurement the number is trying to strike some balance between two different components: the number of entities (e.g: species) and their degree of difference (dissimilarity). Imagine looking at the biodiversity for a pure piece of grassland of only one species of grass and either (i) another species of grass or (ii) a population of rabbits. The species richness, one measure of diversity, would be two for both ecosystems, even though they are quite different—as all the emphasis is on the number of entities, not the level of dissimilarity. I could find biodiversity indices, used by scientists, that could prove either of these two ecosystems had the highest biodiversity.

Many people seem to believe that high biodiversity, usually meaning high species richness, is somehow good and low biodiversity is somehow less good. How many times have environmental campaigners used the phrase as diverse as a tropical rainforest! Or Britain's answer to the tropical rainforest!? Firstly I will show why this idea is wrong, and secondly why I think so many people think high species richness is good, per se. On a global scale it is ridiculous to assign extra value only to high species richness, as we would only ever end up trying to stop the destruction of tropical rain forests and coral reefs, as they have the highest species counts—should we abandon all the worlds arctic zones, as they contain many fewer species than temperate and tropical areas? Of course not. At a local level the idea of the-greater-the-number-of-species-the-better is also not sensible. Imagine a piece of oak woodland: if a species goes locally extinct, the number of species goes down and this is bad. However if Rhododendrons and other species invade our woodland, the number of species goes up. Despite the increase in the measurement of one facet of biodiversity, this is clearly a bad thing as Rhododendrons inhibit woodland regeneration and begin to oust other species.

Why do so many people believe high species numbers are intrinsically a good thing? I think an answer lies with our friends the NGOs again. Purported high biodiversity is often used to compare different areas to decide which to attempt to save and which to allow to be destroyed, or to fight for scare NGO funding to attempt to save and area. If, as is usual, there are too many areas to try to protect, then biodiversity (usually meaning species number) is often used as an objective method of distinguishing what to fight, with high biodiversity areas being the winners. This leads to an attitude of low biodiversity areas being of less worth than other areas. This fits with the philosophical underpinnings of the Romantic-Transcendental Preservation Ethic—the eternal search for the purest, greatest, most spiritually uplifting ecosystems. And leads to complete absurdities: biodiversity inflation gets underway as having high diversity is key to having a chance of not being razed to the ground. And we end up back with Britain's answer to the tropical rainforest type slogans. The end result seems to be that the few relatively unaltered pieces of habitat are therefore pitted against each other on the basis of spurious biodiversity numbers, the public is misled, and were all no nearer to getting to the roots of the problems and stopping habitat destruction.

What Happens If Species Are Lost? Or How Much Biodiversity Do We Need?

"'We are losing half the subject matter of English Poetry,' wrote Aldous Huxely, after reading Rachel Carson's Silent Spring. '*He should have added we are in danger of losing the poets too.'"* - on the back cover of Silent Spring Penguin paperback edition.

If all facets of biodiversity have intrinsic value then nothing short of all biodiversity is valuable and should be maintained. Even those that believe in nothing but their personal well-being should realise, that there is only one earth and whether you like it or not, our fate is bound up with biodiversity. Even the most blinkered technocrat should definitely save our few hundred species that provide the vast majority of the worlds food and medicines, along with the other major benefit of biodiversity: the services provided by ecosystems like water purification, holding soil in place etc. Thus a crucial question, in purely survivalist terms is: how much biodiversity can we alter, or lose, before we threaten our own existence? In ecological terms we need to ask: how does the loss of species relate to the provision of important ecosystem services. There are four ways in which ecosystem processes might respond to reductions in the numbers of constituent species (see *Figure 1*), in addition to the unlikely outcome that there is no relationship. Firstly the diversity-stability hypothesis predicts that ecological communities will have less productivity (energetic efficiency) and be less well able to recover from disturbance (either natural or human-induced) as the number of species decreases (see *Figure 1a*). In short, the more species, the more



stable an ecological community is and the better able to continually supply free service.

Secondly the rivet hypothesis likens the species in an ecosystem to the rivets holding together an aeroplane. The loss of a few rivets go unnoticed, because they may be redundant, or other species take up the slack, but beyond some threshold further species losses will bring about a catastrophic collapse (see *Figure 1b*). So we can lose some species, with few problems, but lose too many, and we don't know how many is too many, and disaster strikes. Thirdly the redundant species hypothesis segregates species into what are called functional groups, that is different species that fulfill similar ecological roles, for example, all the plants that fix nitrogen from the atmosphere. Ecosystem processes function as normal if species are lost, provided there are representatives in each of the functional groups. Thus lots of species can be lost, as long as some remain from each of the groups that maintain the ecological functions (see *Figure 1c*). Fourthly, the idiosyncratic response hypothesis suggests that as diversity changes so do ecosystem functions, but the amount and direction of change is totally unpredictable because individual species are unique and have varied and complex roles (see *Figure 1d*). In short, losing species is dicing with disaster, as ecosystem responses are unpredictable and potentially catastrophic.

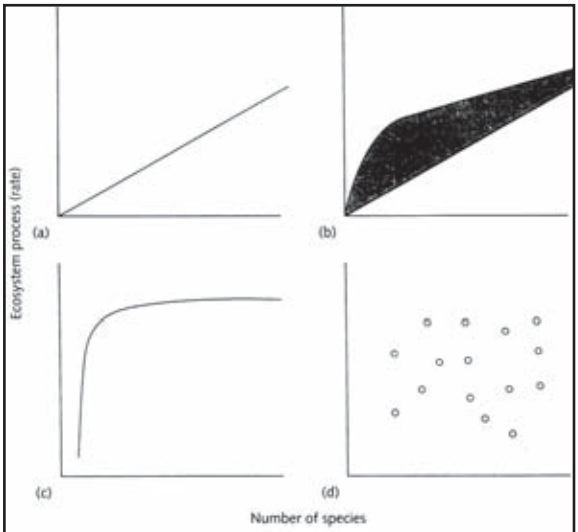


Figure 1 Possible relationships between ecosystem processes and the number of species in communities as predicted by (a) the diversity–stability hypothesis, (b) the rivet hypothesis, (c) the redundancy hypothesis and (d) the idiosyncratic hypothesis. (After Johnson *et al.* 1996.)

From the experiments to date it is unclear which hypothesis best reflects reality. The obstacles to overcome in answering this most pressing of questions are formidable, as it is difficult to distinguish cause and effect (do differences in ecosystem function result from differences in diversity, or vice versa), avoiding changing other factors in experiments, not just diversity, taking answers from small experiments on a few species to large areas of nature with many species, and performing all the necessary combinations of species in an experiment, which even for a few species is huge. Of course, the short answer is that the amount of biodiversity to preserve depends upon the kind of existence we would like to enjoy. However I personally find it incredible that we even have to have a debate about species being in any way redundant or worth allowing to live. Who would condemn all of big-beat techno functionally redundant because we have the Chemical Brothers, or all English landscape painters functionally redundant because we have paintings by Constable?

What's Going Wrong? Extinction and the Biodiversity Crisis

"20% of all bird species are now extinct."
- E. O. Wilson.

It is a seeming paradox that over 90 % of all species that have ever lived are extinct, but that in modern times there are more species on Earth than at any other time in geological history. This is because the rates of creation of new species has exceeded the number of species going extinct. However, throughout the 3.5 billion year history of life on Earth the clock of extinction has not run smoothly. There have been five periods though geological time where huge numbers of species have become extinct, taking millions of years to recover. The best known mass extinction, at the end of the Cretaceous period, which led to the extinction of the dinosaurs and 75-95% of all species alive at the time, was most likely to have occurred due to the impact of an asteroid and the dust clouds which it generated. We are currently at the leading edge of the sixth major extinction of life on Earth—of our own, human, making.

How many species are going extinct? This, in short is impossible to say, as we don't even know how many species there



are on Earth to start with! Also, how do you record an extinction? How long before you give up searching and decide it's not actually there? In the distant past early humans probably caused the extinctions of many large mammals and birds through hunting. More recently, since 1600 there have been over 1000 recorded extinctions, with over half of those this century. The problem is that many species have been, and will be lost, before they have ever been recorded. One method around this is to note that the average lifespan of a species is approximately 1-10 million years, but that recorded extinctions correspond to a average lifespan of only 10,000 years, while rough calculations suggest that current trends may lead to average lifespans of only 200-400 years. Thus extinction rates are upto 10,000 times the natural rate of extinction of one species per year.

Two factors make this depressing scene more so. Firstly there is a process know as extinction debt. That is, there is a time-lag between activities, such as deforestation, and their full effects to be realised. Many species may persist for some time even though the populations of which they belong have ceased to be viable. For example trees which live for hundreds of years may be there, but if they are not in a reproducing population they are actually the living dead. Also extinction is the loss of all local populations, but the losses of individual populations, and major reductions in population levels of a species both represent insidious forms of erosion of biodiversity, even if the extinction of all populations did not occur. And of course it is local populations that people interact with and gain benefit from. For example, it may be important on one level for me to know, say, cherry trees exist in the US, but if populations near me were missing, this is of no use if I want to pick and eat cherries.

Why is there this massive assault on the other life forms we share our planet with? There are four proximate, major causes of species loss: firstly, destruction of habitat (including habitat fragmentation), for example when a woodland is destroyed the species it contains are destroyed, as seen by the example of the maize species *Zea diploperennis* found on a single hillside in Mexico in the 1970s only one week before it was to be destroyed. This is the only perennial maize species ever found. Secondly, alteration of habitat by chemical pollutants, for example the widely known effects of the pesticide DDT on bird species throughout the world, along with acid rain, heavy metal pollution and the like. Thirdly, displacement by introduced species. Humans either intentionally or accidentally, are introducing species to areas where they would not normally occur. These introductions range from entirely harmless to catastrophic, for example, when the brown tree snake found its way to the island of Guam of 18 native bird species 7 became extinct and another four are so rare their survival is unlikely. Fourthly, some species are threatened by overharvesting by humans. The obvious example is fishing—20% of the world's freshwater fish are either extinct of in a state of dangerous decline, marine stocks are also worryingly low. Other examples include hunting for fur, bird's egg collectors and collecting for the pet industry.

These four explanations for the loss of populations and species are not, of course, the ultimate reasons—one has to ask why habitat is destroyed or chemicals released into the environment. I do not have space to go into ultimate causes, however two are obvious: the capitalist regime we live under and numbers of humans on Earth. Briefly, under capitalism, everything, from our own time to food we eat is commodified, as is the natural world. Nature is only worth its exchange-value, without reference to biology. Habitats are not destroyed by magic. Someone pays for it to happen. Land is to be bought, sold and exchanged for profit. This is exceptionally grave for species with reproductive rates lower than the expected rate of return expected on capitalist investments. This is why annual crops are preferred, as returns are yearly—the short-term—and rates of reproduction high. This is why a 3 year rice-growing project is, for a capitalist, always more attractive than a 500 year sustainable timber extraction project.

Let's Make A New Planet... The Case Of Biosphere 2

Scientists tried to make a materially closed system the same as the earth to support 8 adults completely for 2 years. With plants, animals, soil, water, air and climate it cost over US$200 million dollars and hundreds of peoples time to make. It completely failed. Surprise changes in the environment included a dramatic fall in oxygen levels and rise in carbon dioxide, a rise in nitrous oxide concentrations, overloading of water systems with nutrients and the extinction of all pollinators (e.g. bees etc.). In short, all our technology, ingenuity, financial resources and technical skills cannot build a system to provide for 8 humans—let alone a life support mechanism that natural ecosystems provide for free.



The second ultimate cause of species loss is the extremely controversial subject of high human population levels. It is a fact that 6 billion people now inhabit the Earth, and that 6 billion people need more space, land for growing crops, and material goods than 3 billion. It is an uncomfortable fact that we live on a finite planet and that the more humans there are the less space there is for the other life forms we share this planet with. We should take these simple truths onboard, while making every effort to attack those who use population arguments as cover for racism and coercion.

Possible Future Scenarios?

Of all the possibilities for the future I merely wish to sketch out two areas which I think are interesting and may be little known to *DoD* readers: thinking about climate change and biodiversity, and thinking about class in relation to biodiversity.

Humans are altering the gaseous composition of the atmosphere: levels of carbon dioxide are over 40% higher than they were before the industrial revolution (see *Figure 2*). This is causing the Earth's climate to heat up. The effects of climate change and, for example, habitat loss will act together. In essence as the Earth heats up it is expected that species will migrate towards the north and south poles, to keep with a temperature and climate they evolved in. Most species can move to track long-term changes in temperature, plants throw out seeds transported by animals or the wind, birds can fly etc.. If temperature changes are too fast for species to keep up, then extinctions may occur. In the past less rapid changes in climate have forced species to move. Barriers to their movement, such as mountain ranges, have caused extinctions. Currently there are serious human-made barriers to species movement, such as farms, cities and roads. Current estimates are that forest trees need to be moving towards the poles at a rates of tens of kilometres per decade, faster than trees have ever been documented to move. Also, as species respond to climate change as individuals, not communities, ecosystems will be broken up and new communities assembled and re-sorted from the remnant species of older communities that can tolerate the new conditions and whichever new species that manage to arrive. Thus they will also need to cope with new predators, competitors and diseases, further increasing changes of population extinctions.

In terms of humans and our relationship with biodiversity, perhaps globally there will become a new class conflict which revolves not over owning the means of production, but over control of biodiversity as this is a fundamental precursor to our survival. It has been suggested that there are three classes of people in terms of relations to biodiversity: ecosystem people, biosphere people and ecological refugees (I'm not sure I believe this, but it's an interesting way of looking at the world).

Ecosystem people are forest dwellers, peasant farmers, herders and fishers in the mostly non-industrial world who primarily rely/depend on the species within the ecosystem in which they live to meet the bulk of their material requirements, for example, gathering wild foodstuffs, grazing animals, low input agriculture for local consumption. There well-being is closely tied to the ecosystem of which they are a part. Their lives are generally reasonably sustainable as they have, as a minimum, a stake it maintaining their ecosystems as they provide their material needs. Ecosystem people are generally not well plugged into global markets.

Biosphere people are mostly people from the West/First World and the elite of the non-first world, who, in relation to biological resources practice high input industrialised agriculture and animal husbandry for the markets. Biosphere people have access to the resources of much of the whole Earth's biosphere: we can go and buy Caribbean mangos, Pacific tuna fish, or a fur coat from Far East Russia. These resources are brought to biosphere people through an increasingly integrated global market.

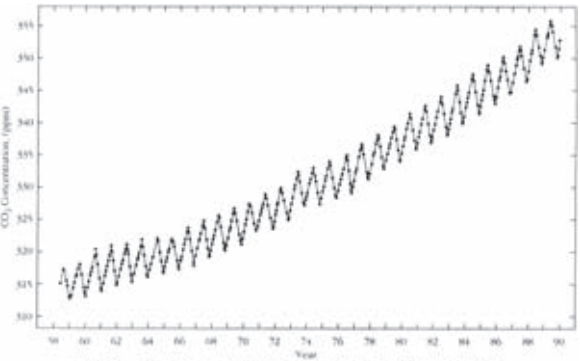


Figure 2 Monthly variations in the concentration of atmospheric CO_2 content at Mauna Loa Observatory, Hawaii, observed with a continuously recording nondispersive infrared gas analyzer. The yearly oscillations reflect seasonal variations in the amount of photosynthesis. the dots indicate monthly average concentration. (Data courtesy of Climate Monitoring and Diagnostics Laboratory, Environmental Research Laboratory, NOAA, Boulder, CO, 1991.)



The most important point about biosphere people is that they do not depend on the species or ecosystems of any particular locality for their immediate well being. However they do have an interest in maintaining a healthy pleasing environment in their immediate vicinity and therefore tend to shift pressure to distant localities: hence the locations with large houses are usually beautiful and exclusive. This is how 60% of Japan can be covered in forest cover (one of the highest in the world)—as it gets all its timber needs from South East Asia and Brazil. Thus pressure generates to efficiently extract and then exhaust resources in distant locations, especially in the Third World, where the mostly ecosystem people are, therefore creating the third category of humanity: the ecological refugees.

Ecological refugees are people deprived of traditional access to species and ecosystems in their immediate vicinity. Probably the majority of Third World city dwellers are ecological refugees. Examples are numerous: peasants who have migrated to the Amazon, ousted from their land in the South of Brazil by export-orientated agribusiness, or basket weavers in India pushed out by large scale paper production for export. Also the UK city dwellers' ancestors were ecological refugees, thrown of their land by enclosure, forced into the cities to work in factories. Ecological refugees have no stake in ecosystems, and as is the case with migrants into tropical forests, do destroy and degrade ecosystems.

It is obvious that ecological refugees are increasing in number, at the expense of the ecosystem people. It is also obvious that the biosphere people control both the ecosystem people and the refugees. Again it is the elite minority coercing the majority. Not that the biosphere people and their capitalist system of social relations go unopposed. The radical social movements throughout the world based on peasants movements and the urban poor, such as Brazil's landless peasants movement, the Movimento Sem Terra (MST), or Mexico's Zapatistas, who oppose capitalism, are in these ecological terms ecological refugees struggling against biospheric oppressors.

In conclusion, I hope I have made the reader aware of the fundamental importance of biodiversity, that the root cause of biodiversity loss is probably capitalism, as this system take no account whatsoever of biology, and the number of humans on Earth, as the more there are of us, the less room there is for our fellow life forms. Without radical, if not revolutionary change, and a move towards seeing the natural world ecocentrically, life will be at best grimmer than at present for most people. I hope I have provided the tools to allow the reader to understand, critique and expose the underlying agendas of why governments, the media, some scientists and most NGOs adopt certain positions on biodiversity and its conservation. I'll finish with two quotes:

"…the worst thing that will probably happen—in fact is already well underway—is not energy depletion, economic collapse, conventional war, or even the expansion of totalitarian governments. As terrible as these catastrophes would be for us, they can be repaired within a few generations. The one process now ongoing that will take millions of years to correct is the loss of genetic and species diversity by the destruction of natural habitats. This is the folly our descendants are least likely to forgive us."
- E.O. Wilson.

"There is only one thing in life that you have to do, and that is die. Everything else is optional."
- Anonymous.

Further Reading

The most important scientific information is reported, replete with much jargon, in scientific journals. Ones to take a look at are: *Science*, *Nature*, *Ecology*, *Ecological Monographs*, *Journal of Ecology* and the quite readable, and most radical, *Conservation Biology*.

General ecology textbooks give a good introduction and overview to modern ecology. Good ones are:
Begon, M, Harper, JL, and Townsend,CR, 1996. *Ecology: Individuals, Populations and Communities*. (Sinauer Associates Press, Sunderland, MA, USA.)
Kormondy, E.J. 1996. *Concepts in Ecology. (*Prentice-Hall International, London, UK.)

For an overview of Conservation Biology try:
Hunter, ML, Jr, 1996. *Fundamentals of Conservation Biology.* (Blackwell Scientific Publishers, Oxford, UK.)

For a 'popular science' personal and interesting view of Biodiversity try:
Wilson, EO, 1992. *The Diversity of Life*. (Penguin Books, London, UK.)

Overviews of Biodiversity, including the book that first coined the word:
Gaston, KJ, and Spicer, JI, 1998. *Biodiversity: An Introduction*. (Blackwell Scientific Publishers, Oxford.)
Wilson, EO, Editor, 1986. *Biodiversity*. (National Academy Press, Washington DC, USA.)

Conservation and Ethics:
Callicott, JB, 1990. *Whither Conservation Ethics? (*Conservation Biology, Volume 4, pages 15 to 20.)
Kellert, SR, 1996. *The Value of Life: Biological Diversity and Human Society.* (Island Press, Washington DC, USA.)

Biodiversity and Climate Change:
Peters RL and Lovejoy, TE Editors. 1992. *Global Warming and Biological Diversity.* (Yale University Press, New Haven.)

Biocentrism
Ideology Against Nature



That humanity is somehow 'out of balance' with nature is hardly a topic of controversy nowadays. There is little question that humans are fouling the world to the point of suicide for us and mass extinction for all other life. To claim otherwise is ludicrous. In a variety of ways, people have attempted to grasp the problem, define it, and seek solutions. Of the many new and more faddish results, few have been as popular as Deep Ecology—also known as Biocentrism—the view that humans are acting out of excessive human-centredness (anthropocentrism) and thus destroying the planet and the rest of the species which have just as much 'intrinsic right' to live out their biological destiny as we do. Accordingly, Biocentrism (life/earth/nature centredness) calls for a new way of acting. Specifically, it calls for 'earth-centred' activity and thinking—putting the 'earth first' (instead of putting ourselves first) as a way out of the global dilemma.

In the following rant I wish to take a critical look at these assertions and show them for what I believe to be false, misleading and even counter-productive. I don't mean this to be a sermon or some statement of absolute truth. No way!

What follows is, more than anything else, just my initial attempt at deciphering and understanding the relationships between some types of ideas and activity that I've discovered to be true to the best of my experience. The points I take on here, and their broader implications, have been of central importance to many of the great disputes and inconsistencies within what can loosely be called the 'radical ecology movement'. Hopefully, my efforts here will help to encourage further discussion.

According to its proponents, Biocentrism is nature-centred living. It therefore must be premised on an irreconcilable separation of humans and nature. This is so because if humans were inherently natural beings—i.e: an equal part of nature, fully integrated into the natural flow of life—then to be human-centred (anthropocentric) would also imply being nature-centred (biocentric). But Biocentrism has already been defined by its practitioners to be the opposite of Anthropocentrism. So, according to Biocentrist thought (nature-centred philosophy) humans are irredeemably estranged from nature—or were never part of it in the first place—because 'human' is posited as the opposite of 'nature' (Anthropocentrism versus Biocentrism). Oddly, Anthropocentrism implies the very same thing. If Anthropocentrism is human-centred living and this is the opposite of Biocentrism, or nature-centred living, then once again, 'human' and 'nature' are opposite and therefore separate. It is a contradiction to say that two positions which are identical are, in fact, opposite. I will try to resolve this dilemma by going outside of what is common to both Biocentrism and Anthropocentrism—ideological thinking.

Ideological thinking is false consciousness. In other words, it is ideas and activity which originate elsewhere, outside of our own emotional and intellectual subjectivity, our identity. Ideology is when we mistake others' thoughts for our own or when our own thoughts become rigid and fossilised and those thoughts come to control us—instead of the other way around. Marxism, all religions, guru cults are all very clear and obvious examples of ideological thinking. The politically correct sacred or official line is what one must adhere to. These ideas and demands on our activity originate not out of our own needs or desires, or ideas or personal lived experience or community, but from outside of us, externally to us. Other examples of ideologically (false) activity include: all political ideologies, 'causes' (doing things for 'the cause' instead of for our own needs), consumerism (externally created wants and preferences) and philosophies.



Both Biocentrism, and its necessary companion, Anthropocentrism, are ideologies. They both place *external* demands on our thinking and activity. Biocentrism differs from, say, Marxism, Christianity or the Moonies only in *content*. In *form* it is identical. How it differs is that it demands that we act, not according to the politically, morally or guru determined correct line, but to the 'naturally' correct one. 'Nature'—or an abstract overruling *idea-of-nature* replaces the guru, Bible or Party doctrines. There is no room in any of these (or any other ideologies) for the vagaries of human wildness, independent thought, activity or desire—or nature. All thought and activity is pre-scribed, determined externally to our human need, desires. At times we may agree



with something that is also part of an ideology. But at this point, if it is truly no longer ideological, no longer external, no longer false consciousness, then we need not invoke the label, category, guru, or other 'authority' to justify our ideas and activity. In other words, instead of saying "according to the Marxist doctrines...", or "The Bible says...", or "Deep Ecology says...", we would say "*I* think that...", "*I've* noticed that...", "*I* feel that...", or "*I'm* doing this because...". In this case—authentic, subjective ideas and activity based on our constantly changing needs and desires and always personally checked out against our own everyday lived experience—we can defend and explain our ideas and activity with arguments and examples that we know to be true because we've thought about or actually experienced them. (This has been called 'theory'—more on that later). In other words, we can claim our ideas as our own.

When we are in the grips of ideological thinking and acting we cannot do this because the ideas are not our own—we did not think, feel or experience them for ourselves. (Ideology, in this way, is administered thought, directed action—more on that later.) Therefore, we cannot argue, explain or justify them ourselves. Instead when someone opposes or challenges our ideology, we must put them into a category—i.e: label them as 'other'. The label (authority, justification) of the ideologist is then used to justify *evasion* of any challenge. Some examples are "That's just Marxism...", "That's Violence, we follow the Non-Violence Code...", "She's a Humanist...". Thus, any challenge to an ideology can be dismissed as that of an 'outsider' in the eyes of the Party faithful who will all nod their heads in agreement at how clever the ideologist is.

Earlier I referred to 'theory'. Theory is (to clearly define it at least for the sake of this discussion) the opposite of ideology. Ideology is inside-out theory. In ideological activity, the motivations come from without. With theory, motivations come from within, from our own *subjective* ideas, experiences, longings and needs. Thus theory can also be called 'self-theory'. Most people today are walking around inside-out, motivated and directed by a myriad of things—anything but themselves. Theory is never static, never rigid. Our theory, if we fail to constantly evolve and test it against our experience and new information, quickly fossilises into ideological thinking.

When we base our activities and ideas on our self-theory, we can clearly see what the actuality behind new information is and choose to take or leave whatever we want. The self-theorist skips and dances through the great supermarket of ideology, tearing open every package, scattering the contents and appropriating what seems good and nourishing and discarding the rest. The ideologist shops carefully, or even perhaps on impulse, looking for just the right fit of pre-packaged ideas to take home and consume wholeheartedly—after paying at the register of course! Ideologists often are brand switchers. They'll stick with one package of (non) thought only until the next one in a shinier package comes along and lures them in. Other ideologists maintain a life-long brand loyalty!

In the earlier discussion about ideologists using labels to evade challenges, we can say that the self-theorist can easily see—and see past—ideological boundaries of the opponent by watching for examples of ideological thinking such as statements like "Deep Ecology says that...", "Marxism says that..", "Gandhi would've said that...". The person under the influence of an ideology, a false consciousness, on the other hand, having constructed these barriers, cannot see out. It has become a wall, a real barrier to advancement, a very un-radical thing to do.



Note also that just as the ideologist isn't the originator of his/her ideas, so s/he neither claims the credit for them (e.g. "*Biocentrism* says..."). But here is another example of how the ideologist is mystified. Doctrines, ideologies and the like do not *themselves* talk and so it is wrong and misleading to say "Biocentrism *says*...". Who is Biocentrism? When we begin to ask such questions, we can peel off layers of mystification and confusion like the skin of an onion until we can see what lies beneath: Actually Biocentrism doesn't say anything. Actual people do and say things such as "Biocentrism this and that...", not some mystical Biocentrism force or creature. It's important to uncover the real source of ideas we hold so they can be fully evaluated on their actual content and meaning. If we then really do agree, then we can say "I think this and that..." and the ideas will no longer have control over us. We will control the ideas. Beware the dangers of attributing concrete activity and thinking to abstract concepts or doctrines or slogans.

In response to attacks, the person who engages in ideological thinking and activity simply builds higher and bigger walls. To continue this imagery for a moment longer, we can see that eventually the ideologist will be overwhelmed by the theorist who, being free to think, evaluate and rove around, will eventually find the cracks and weak spots that will bring the whole thing down with little effort. Imagine a guerrilla group with a radical self-theory challenging a monolithic state military force under the grip of a rigid chain of command (external control, ideology). This whole preceding discussion has obvious relevance for anyone engaged in direct subversive resistance—or think they are: ideology creeps up where you'd least expect it. But you can draw you own conclusions on that...



I've tried to present a fairly clear and simplified (if not simplistic) picture of what ideological activity is, how it operates and how it can limit us. I've tried to contrast that with theory, a better way to understand the world and think and act. What I'll try to do now is explain how ideology is the death knell of radical change, of humanity, of nature and of the earth and wilderness. I showed at the very beginning how Biocentrism (an ideology, a category of Nature-ally correct thought and activity, a label used to discredit opposing views, an external source of ideas and action, an authority) is premised on the view that humans are separate from nature and act out of human-centeredness (Anthropocentrism) and this is what is destroying the earth. But I also showed that the apparent *opposites* of Biocentrism and Anthropocentrism both in fact mean the *same* thing. I said that this dichotomy was resolvable by breaking out of *ideological* forms of thought. This is what I mean.

I'd like to start with this assertion: Humans are not separate from nature. Our 'nature' is that which is most 'natural' to us—our deepest needs, desires, dreams, internally defined ideas (self-theory), our emotional wants and expression, our wild, animal instincts. Our human nature is our wild, free animal instinct and subjectivity. This is what is *most natural* and also what is *most human* about us since these qualities arise *naturally* and from *within us*. 'Human' and 'nature' are not contradictory, mutually exclusive terms.

Both Biocentrism (life/nature/earth-centred) and Anthropocentrism (human-centrism) mean the same thing, yet one is defined as being opposed to the other. They both are ideologies. They both are external, packaged thought for consumption and directed action. Both have adherents who purport that the ideology must be allowed to do the thinking for us, and that we must act out of motivations it prescribes. Ideological thinking requires that we relinquish our desires, our unpredictability, our ability to change and adapt and submit them to the category, label, doctrine, guru, Bible or, in the case of Biocentrism, to an abstracted Nature; *an idea of nature*.

When we relinquish our desires and wild animal instincts, we are relinquishing what is most *natural*, what is most *human* about us. Ideological thinking (false consciousness, since the



thoughts and actions are not our own) is the enemy of nature. It is the enemy of humans because it deprives us of what makes us human—our human nature, our wildness. *All* authority—since it is ideological, externally imposed—is the enemy of nature and wildness. All domination and obedience kills nature in us, deprives us of our natures by depriving us of our humanity, our dreams, desires and wildness.

This is the mistake of claiming to act or think in the name of something external to us—whether it be Biocentrism, Marxism, Non-Violence, 'The Cause', America, Deep Ecology or an *abstracted idea of Nature itself*. These all kill our unruly, natural wild humanity. To say we are thinking or acting for Deep Ecology of the Earth or Nature or the Spotted Owl is to act for reasons external to us. To do this we must submit our desires to these ideological forms of thought, we must suppress our wildness, individuality—our nature. What a bizarre circumstance, to be risking injury or imprisonment to defend *an idea of nature* while killing the *real living nature* in ourselves! Of course, if you are doing/thinking those things for yourself and not killing wildness, not killing nature, not involved in ideological activity, them there is no reason to invoke labels as justifications. Be able to say: "I'm doing this out of my own desires for wildness, for my own human nature (or whatever)." And herein lies the way out of the contradiction.

Both Biocentrism and Anthropocentrism are ideologies and therefore anti-nature. If we act out of Biocentrism we are actually killing our nature, *not* being nature-centred. If we act out of Anthropocentrism, we are *not* acting out of our human-centred desires and wild animal instincts. We are acting out of ideological demands. So, Biocentrism is anti-nature and Anthropocentrism is anti-human! So they are both anti-human and anti-nature.

So, big deal? But this becomes critical when we see that it is this same mode of self-denial or self-repression of wildness that allows us to do anti-human activity and anti-nature activity in this society. Biocentrism (and all ideologies), therefore, reinforces this precondition, reinforces our domestication. The actual daily activity, the dominant mode of human existence on the earth today is *mislabelled* by the Biocentrists. It is not Anthropocentrism, not human-centred. It is not done to meet human needs, not done as a result of the fulfilment of wild human desires. This activity is done to fulfil the needs of power and capital, nation-states and commodity-exchange, the whole military-industrial-national-empire. It should rightly be called production-centred or power-centred or death-centred since we must kill our wild natures to be part of it. Our daily activity is done to keep this 'Machine' running. This Machine is what is devouring the earth, nature, wilderness and humanity. To work in the entrails of this 'leviathan' requires that we submit all our wildness to the needs, schedules and routines of it. On a daily basis, this is how we individually kill our desire for our nature, our wildness.

To do this, to suppress our own wild, human, animal instincts, we must put on successively think layers of emotional 'armour' to protect ourselves from the pain of a murdered nature trying to break through. Like asphalt and herbicide to keep the wild plants from destroying the roadbed, this armour must be constantly added to or it begins to fall away. This armour can also be thought of as the *internalisation* of the Machine, its logic and schedules. Eventually the armour can be mistaken for what it is suppressing in the same way that so many people today mistake concrete, machinery and media images for the real world. This is the success of the system, the goal of our education, the triumph of Domestication over Wilderness.

It is only such armoured beings, domesticated humans who have internalised the Machine, that would engage in self-destructive/nature-destructive activity. Herein lies the danger of *all* modes of ideological (pseudo) awareness and activity (of which Biocentrism is but one of many, many). By encouraging us to follow that which is external to us, that which negates our own *human* wildness and desires, these ways of thinking and acting, *help build our emotional armour against nature*! They encourage self-repression and domestication. Ideology causes us to further distrust our wild natural instincts to be free. In this way, we are more able to destroy the world while at the same time we are that much less able to transcend and break free from this very mode of destructive behaviour.

What is needed is a subjective, critical, internal-human-nature-centred type of 'self-theory' that helps us peel away the mystification surrounding our relation to ourselves, our world and our daily activity. We need to see domestication and suppression of wilderness and freedom clearly and without illusions before we can begin the wild, liberatory celebration of our nature, the creation of planetary wilderness and the pitiless annihilation of everything which stands in the way.

Sabbing Shell
Office Occupation A-Go-Go!

On January 4th, the first working day of 1999, the Managing Directors at Shell-Mex House in London returned from their Christmas vacations to find their offices barricaded. The fact that it was Ogoni Day[1] was not marked on their corporate calendars. Nor was there a reference in their smart new year diaries to the massacre of the Ijaw people in the occupied lands of Nigeria.



Other activists, Shell employees and the media scrambled for more information on the office occupation, which was being broadcast on a live website from inside the building. Meanwhile, in Nigeria the Ijaw people were busy ensuring that Shell's image was not the only thing being damaged. Nigerian oil production has been cut by a up to a third thanks to occupations of oil refineries and machinery sabotage.[2] The resulting military crack-down had begun to filter through during the Christmas holidays. As an act of solidarity the action could not have been better timed. The Ijaw people had demanded the withdrawal of Shell from their lands by January 11th, 1999. The Shell-sponsored Nigerian state response had been to execute eight youths and commit a series of atrocities including rape, torture and looting in the first days of the new year (see article on page 260 of this issue). News of the occupation reached the Niger Delta via the offices of Environmental Rights Action in Port Harcourt. Perhaps it provided a few shreds of hope for the extraordinary people—Ijaw, Ogoni or part of the grassroots Chikoko resistance movement—who have consistently put their lives and livelihoods on the line by calling for a complete end to multi-national corporate oil production in their lands.

Back in the UK the occupation provided a taste of things to come for Shell and other multi-national corporations, in what is turning out to be an interesting year. Cries of "Our resistance is as transnational as capital!" are already reverberating in multi-national head offices. While refiling various bits of paper in one of the offices, activists found a document entitled 'Global Scenarios'. This booklet predicted a rise in the globalisation of protest which would be difficult to police and control. Shell had already decided that its strategy would be to detach itself from its global corporate domination image and focus instead on its contribution to local communities ['Glocalisation', in wanky new business parlance]. European environmental activists got a special mention. Apparently Shell and other multi-national organisations are at a loss to explain our ability to become so angry at their behaviour. Their concern centred on our apparent ability to organise quickly and effectively via friendship links and the internet.

The occupation of the Shell-Mex offices in central London was looked upon as an outstanding success. While we would not wish to preach or claim that we have a monopoly on being organised, certain well known but too frequently ignored tactics used during the organisation of this action certainly helped. In a nutshell, a healthy cocktail of elaborate planning, a few splashes of chaos and a whole heap of luck ensured that bosses of multi-national corporations in London were reminded on the first working day of 1999 that their days are numbered.

Good and bad things about the Shell Action: A personal view.

We achieved our aims.

By the time the action happened, we were, as one of the participants put it, "a group that knows exactly what it wants to achieve and why". Some of us had become involved in the action simply in response to the question "We're going to hit an oil company on January 4. Wanna come?" The problem is that sometimes, as activists, we don't get any further than this. We know who the enemy is—what more could we need to know? On the Shell action we thought and thought about why we were doing it. Principles and objectives were thrashed out early on. At the time the process seemed pretentious but in retrospect it pulled us together. A briefing document was prepared so that everyone was equipped with the same amount of knowledge. It goes without saying that a sense of passion and anger provided the motivation to act. What made the Shell action a success was that this



passion was combined with pragmatic considerations of where to hit, how and why.

The aims of the action:

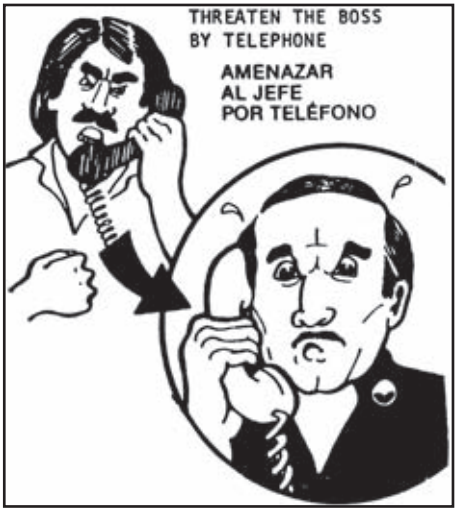
- To show real solidarity with people in the Niger Delta rebelling against Big Oil and its private security force (the Nigerian army). It has becoming increasingly easy for multi-national corporations to isolate struggles and resistance. The strength of linking together undermines their ability to do this.
- Economic sabotage, in the form of disruption of Shell's working day by direct action. An important factor highlighted at one of the planning meetings was that the Shell-Mex offices was where images were manufactured. The office occupation and banner drop made it harder for Shell to maintain their respectable facade for a day.
- To spread dissent and lower the morale not only of Shell's workforce, but of other oil industry companies and the corporate world in general.
- To carry out a symbolic occupation of the seat of power within Shell-Mex House.

In this glorious anti-corporation year the message was clear and simple. Shell also provided an ideal target. Too often we get side-tracked on single issues. Oil companies, with their hideous environmental and social record, combine a series of struggles not only in the developing world but in the UK too.

It was well planned.

Meetings were held well in advance to ensure that the jobs that needed to be done were parcelled out. Tasks were taken on and separate working groups sorted out the internet site, the banner, the text of the leaflet to employees. Each job was valued, criticism was kept to a minimum and praise was dished out regularly. People split up into discussion groups to make decisions and affinity groups were sorted out.

Logistics of how to get into the building, where the Managing Directors' offices were, how to get there, how to barricade, what to wear, and how to negotiate were discussed well in advance. Too many office occupations simply fail because the main concern is how to get into the building. Once we've made it through the door all hell breaks loose. This time we knew where we were going and how to get there. As one group walked up the stairs, they had a long and detailed conversation about someone's sister who was undergoing fertility treatment. The result was that we were calm and other office staff smiled as they overheard the conversation.



Tips:

- People always judge you by your shoes—shine them up.
- Iron clothes, however smart they are—if they're creased you'll give the game away.
- Take earrings out of noses and don't go overboard on jewellery.
- Pay special attention to how you want your character to look.

We had the joy of watching Shell's offices get totally trashed

…not by us, but by the forces of evil themselves. Knowing how to barricade an office certainly helps. Filing cabinets, expensive desks, computers and chairs were piled high in front of doors and inner walls. Shell employees and the police then decided to smash through the walls after failing in their exasperating attempts to 'negotiate' with us (the usual "Come out now, you've made your point"!), and they caused thousands of pounds worth of damage. The 'situationist' group occupying Malcolm Brinded's office on the fourth floor arranged seats for a theatre-like view of the Tactical Support Group as they smashed their way in. Offers of tea and biscuits neatly arranged on the coffee table somewhat undermined the police's orders of "On the floor! Now! Everybody!" The police were made to look like fools and we had a good laugh!

It was well-timed.

Firstly because of what was happening in Nigeria. Activists' access to the Web while in the building



meant that we could get hold of information directly. News of the recent killings in the Niger Delta was still coming through, which had the effect of making us ever angrier. Doubts and fears about what we were doing were instantly dispelled as we continued to hear of the atrocities being carried out by the Nigerian Army. As one activist stated to a Shell bigwig: "You have blood on your hands." Secondly because January 1999 marked the handover from the outgoing head of Shell UK, Chris Fay, to the new man at the top, Malcolm Brinded—both their offices were occupied on January 4th, letting them know that whoever's in charge we're going to be watching them. Also, when Shell turned off the phones and electricity we were self-sufficient. Mobile phones meant that we could continue contact with each other and the outside world.

We didn't go to jail.

We thought we would. But we didn't. Instead, we got a few hours in a police cell, followed by release with no charges, presumably because Shell did not want the embarrassment of a court case. All this had the added bonus of the police being cheesed off with Shell for using them as their private security force. Pissed off Shell, pissed off the pigs, and we're free. Cool.

The website.

One of the concerns around this 'innovation' was that it might be a media gimmick. In the event, this concern was well-founded—the *Guardian*'s piece on the action focused entirely on the website, went on about other revolutionary groups who use the internet (my, how clever of us), turned it into an advert for Undercurrents, and didn't mention the Ijaw once. Seriously.

However, that says more about mainstream media than about the real reason why we went live on the internet with a site which closely resembled Shell's own. We were both using our own media and subverting theirs. By the end of the week a large number of people had visited the site, including Shell in the UK, the Netherlands, the US and Australia; Texaco in the UK and US; oil company Amerada Hess; the US military and US government and some dodgy-looking Romanian finance house. The site received 10,230 hits on January 4th alone. The next day Shell threatened to injunct the web site which appears alongside its own when the word 'Shell' is searched for.



The banner.

The banner which appeared mid-morning between two lamp posts on Waterloo Bridge as crowds were beginning to gather around the Shell-Mex offices was excellent. It read 'Shell: Filthy, Thieving Murderers—It's Time To Go'. Our message, our thoughts, completely unadulterated by the media circus. Discussions that we had after the action focused on how this had more power than any press article. Imagine if there had been a series of banner drops around London to coincide with the occupation!

The leaflet.

A group of five individuals went back the next day and leafleted employees. Shell employees were dying to know what had happened and why. Workers had to file through police lines, collecting flyers as they went. After, suggestions were made about writing up a version of the action and distributing this to workers with an invitation to leak further information to us. Such follow-ups limit the ability of companies to whitewash actions and lower morale generally.

The affinity groups worked.

Of course, it's easy to be all luvvie and self-congratulatory after a good action, but there are good reasons why the group dynamics worked surprisingly well:

- We didn't agree on everything, but through some fairly heavy and long discussions before the action (actually, even before we got down to the planning), we thrashed out what our aims were and whittled them down to some fairly hardcore objectives.
- There were differing levels of experience within the group, but everyone worked on respecting each other. There were disagreements but we had the tools to deal with these and the ability to finally reach a consensus. We also didn't break the agreements that we'd made with each other about how we would conduct the negotiations.



- The actual affinity groups were very small (4, 4 and 5), which both made us focused and enabled individuals to work very closely with one another in equality.

We were 'experts' on the Niger Delta situation.

Thanks to the briefing document it was difficult for Shell to sidetrack us. When the outgoing Managing Director Chris Fay wheeled out a Nigerian employee who assured us from behind the barricades that he knew we were doing this for him, activists promptly replied and demanded to discuss the current situation in the Delta with the Ijaw. The Nigerian employee disappeared as quickly as he had arrived.

Things that were not so good.

We wanted to be in there for 24 hours.

Unfortunately the combined force of 30 Tactical Support Unit bods in riot gear smashing through the walls and our lack of ingenuity (D-Locking ourselves to a wheelie chair in one instance) meant that we were dragged out once the office had been dismantled.

Planning an action over the winter holidays.

The resulting disruption (no-one was where they usually were) on top of a few hangovers and transport nightmares caused plenty of preparation stress which should have been unnecessary. Not least of these was a few of us arriving really late to the planning meeting the day before the action. But then perhaps it's a cop-out to blame it all on Christmas—maybe the truth is that deep inside every sorted activist there's a lunchout dying to escape.

[Damn right! (See ya…)—Ed.]

Lack of a collective decision about the presence of the 'alternative' media.

Those who invited Undercurrents assumed that it would be okay with everyone else, while those who would have preferred them not to be involved had not articulated the good reasons why not. This was then compounded by the issue being discussed the night before the action with the Undercurrents person already part of the group. Kinda hard to start a big political discussion at that point.

Total lack of security after the action happened.

Most activists appear to have rather large egos! Enough said!

Liaison with Nigerian groups in London

…prior to the action was a bit farcical. But then it's not realistic to expect an action-level relationship after two rushed phone calls to a group or person not familiar with the direct action ethic. Fortunately, such relationships are beginning to be fostered since the occupation took place.

Post-action idea: Reallocating the press role.

Given the emphasis above on 'direct communication' it might be thought that the action did not bother with conventional press. Wrong—we had a 'press officer', put out a press release, and also had the participation of an Undercurrents activist. One participant lost all their hardcore credibility instantly when, upon learning of the arrival of TV crews outside, they danced across the room saying "The cameras are here! The cameras are here!"

Some interesting suggestions were made after the action about an alternative role for a press worker or Publicity and Communications Person as they could now be known, such as:

- Ringing around EF! and other similar groups to let them know about the action and asking for support—support possibly taking the form of a phone or fax blockade, bogus press calls, leafleting and shutting down local Shell garages.
- Faxing other oil companies to let them know what's happening and informing them that they are equally a target.
- Contacting groups in other countries struggling against the same company.
- Directly contacting the group you're trying to support in your solidarity action.

There was a feeling amongst individuals that far too much time was spent discussing the conventional press. It is well to remember that the deep fundamental change we want will never be achieved by relying on the media industry, which after all is as much part of global capitalism as Shell.

Conclusion.

Clearly a one-off office occupation in solidarity with indigenous groups in the Niger Delta is not going to change the world nor indeed bring a company like Shell to its knees.

However as a symbolic act of solidarity it made its point, made the participants feel positive and with any luck gave some hope to those fighting in the Niger Delta. In the game of cricket that has developed with the state (our tactics are well known and the police know how to deal with them), the Shell action proved that if we spend the time and energy in preparation and organisation then office occupations and other such actions still have a role to play. As we were occupying Shell-Mex House, news filtered through of the Reclaim The Streets occupation of London Underground's head offices in support of the striking tube workers, and of 60 people up trees and down tunnels in a Crystal Palace eviction alert: Triple Whammy!!!!!!



Update: 21/4/99 The Shell Centre—their other London headquarters—splashed with red and green paint as Mark Moody-Stuart (annual salary £1.4m) launched Shell's second annual report, called *People, Planet, Profit—An Act of Commitment*. This was an act taken in solidarity with the people of the Niger Delta and to make clear that despite the greenwash, there is blood on their hands and there can never be a 'green' or 'ethical' oil industry.

Notes

1. Ogoni Day has been celebrated since 1993 to mark the anniversary of the day the Ogoni people launched their struggle against Shell and forced the oil company off their lands.
2. Nigeria produces 2 million barrels a day of oil— "up to a third of output was halted at one point last year by piracy and sabotage by activists demanding a fairer share of revenues for the region's impoverished inhabitants"—*The Financial Times* 09/06/99.

Contacts

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Tel: +234 84 236 365
E-mail: oilwatch@infoweb.abs.net
Oilwatch North America
c/o Project Underground, 1847 Berkeley Way, Berkeley CA 94703, USA.
Tel: +1 510 705 8981
E-mail: project_underground@moles.org
Project Underground have just produced the *Shell-Shocked Refugee* report: This booklet features testimony from several of the Ogoni peoples, who have been forced to flee Nigeria since 1996, into a refugee camp in neighbouring Benin. Reading their stories, the plight of these corporate refugees—victims of Anglo-Dutch oil multinational Shell and the Nigerian military's reprisal—becomes clear and palpable. Order your copy now for just $5 inside the US or $7 international.
Also available from Project Underground is *In Remembrance: Ken Saro-Wiwa*, a 50 minute documentary detailing the struggle of the Ogoni people against Shell and the military dictatorship. Available for $15 plus $3 postage.
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Make Your Own Millennium Bug!

There's a lot of job satisfaction in de-activating silicon-based life forms on an office occupation, so we thought we'd offer you the benefit of years of our experience at crashing computers. The three basic techniques that follow apply to Windows 95 or 98, and probably to Windows NT too. Start by opening the Windows Explorer and check how many drives there are—if there are more than 4, the computer is probably attached to the office network.

Re-formatting: While this may cause the least damage of the three methods, if there is no network attachment it may be your best option. To format the disk, simply select 'Start menu - shutdown - restart computer in MSDOS mode'. When you get the C:\> Prompt, type 'format c:/u'.

Repartitioning: If you're going to re-format a hard disk, you might as well repartition it too—this makes it harder to recover data than just re-formatting it. Stick a floppy disk in when you get to the C:\> Prompt, and type 'sys a:', followed by 'copy c:\windows\command\fdisk.*a:'. If no file is found, type 'copy c:\dos\fdisk.*a:' and format as described above. Reboot the PC with the floppy disk in the machine and type 'fdisk'. Delete all partitions, reboot again, type 'fdisk' again and finally create 2 or 3 new partitions.

Deleting files on the hard disk is pretty straightforward. Highlight those you want to delete—select lots by holding the 'Shift' or 'control' key down as you click. Hold down the 'Shift' key before you press the 'delete' key, and don't release it until the 'confirm file delete' box appears. It is also worth emptying the recycle bin after deleting—click on the bin and choose 'empty recycle bin' from the 'file' menu. Installing a Disk cleanup utility (www.execpc.com/~sbd/CleanUp.html) after deleting should make it almost impossible to recover the data, is much more effective than simply formatting the disk, and the utility is also small enough to fit conveniently onto a floppy disk.

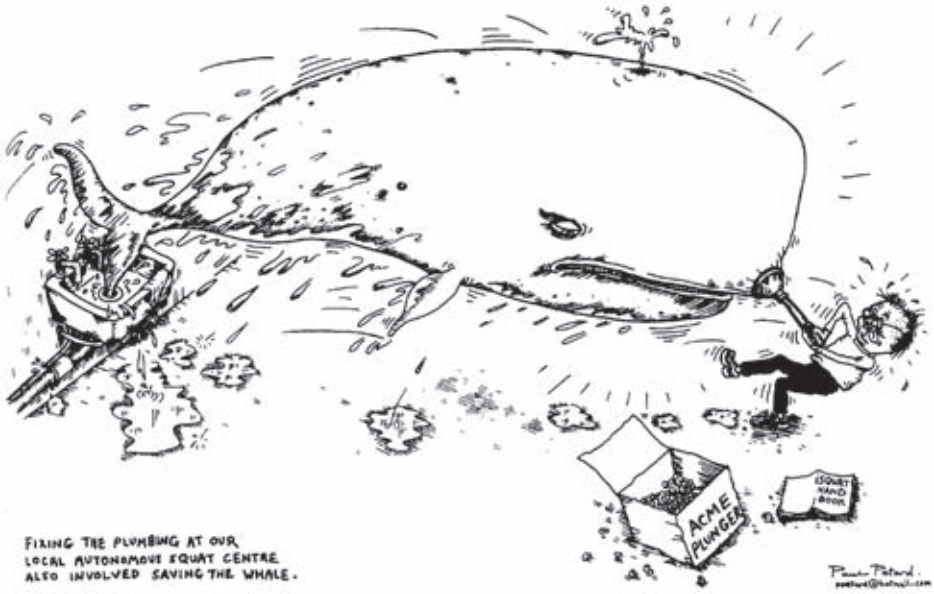
To delete files from a network drive follow the same procedure as above, but when you've deleted something, go to 'Start menu - Run' and type 'command'. Change to the drive that you have deleted from by typing the drive letter and a colon (eg. 'u:'), then type 'cd/', followed by 'purge*/a'. On most networks this should ensure that files are completely deleted.

(This is condensed from a more extensive article in the April 1999 *EF! Action Update* (available from Action Update address—see contacts on p. 344—or at: www.eco-action.org/efau). See also the *Hacktivism* section on p. 322 of this issue.)

We Must Devastate the Hard Drives Where the Wealthy Live!

Autonomous Spaces

There's a Storm Brewing in Every Teacup...



All across the country empty buildings are being squatted, tea is being brewed and friendly subversion is being spread through Britain's shopping streets. The appeal of a squat cafe to active groups is clear: an autonomous zone is created in the heart of the community, serving as a space from which individuals involved in direct action can organise and also as an attempt at 'activist' involvement in their local community. The concept is simple—take a disused space somewhere with a fair number of passers-by and open it to the public, offering them tea and anarchy.

Leeds

In early 1998, Leeds EF! picked up on the idea of opening a squat cafe. They took over an old pottery building owned by the College of Technology and named it 'The Cookbridge Street Cafe' ('cos it was on Cookbridge Street, surprise, surprise). They were evicted after only two weeks, so they had a second go, only to be chased out of their chosen building by thugs with baseball bats. No luck there! In Spring 1999, a collective of mostly new people occupied a church. A 'naming contest' resulted in its christening as 'A-Spire'. There was the cafe, a library, a bike repair area, and workshops were held including rope climbing from the roof—the top of the spire was only accessible by rope! A wide range of groups from Kosovan refugees to Greenpeace held meetings there, and A-Spire also served as the gathering point for a Critical Mass bike action. Parties were put on that raised money for the cafe. Cookbridge Street was run more like a cafe, with orders taken for food and then brought to the tables; A-Spire was run more like a soup kitchen. Both lived off donations from the punters and, according to a collective member, at A-Spire this resulted in a loss of money. A-Spire had lots of response, though, being more 'on the main drag'. The church is owned by the university, and after a few unsuccessful meetings with university officials, A-Spire prepared to resist eviction in case they wouldn't be able stay their intended four weeks. In the end, the one month stay was achieved without confrontation and the collective left the building, exhausted from the day-to-day running of a squat centre. They are intending to squat again, but in future at a more sustainable level of activity, opening only a few times a week. Contact Leeds EF!, c/o CRC, 16 Sholebroke Avenue, Leeds LS7 3HB, www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Parliament/3344

Citizen Smith, North London

Eyeing up a beautiful old disused Victorian Magistrate's Court they knew was in disputed ownership, a group of mates squatted it with the intention to use the space for more than just living in. The



building's physically separated private and public space seemed perfect for this, and they opened it as a cafe on Sundays. Everything's free at Citizen Smith; all the interior decoration and most of the food comes out of skips. Being in Holsdon, "not a very nice area, really", according to a collective member, the local response has been slow. "It's just word of mouth and trust built up over a period of time, no matter how nice you are, that can bring you into the community." In the meantime they moved onto a new premises in Kensal Green, but are considering buggering off to the countryside to grow vegetavles. Contact: Old Community Centre, 161 College Road, Kensal Green, London, NW10, citizensmith@hotmail.com, 07931 980534

Realitea Cafe, Norwich

Christmas 1998 saw an ex-bookshop opened as a squat cafe in Norwich. A collective member recounts: "A recently formed group with varying levels of experience in activism thought it would be a good idea to do a squat centre as a form of outreach and as a group building exercise. We had quite a lot of meetings beforehand, to battle out issues that could arise and how we would deal with various things. This proved useful for dealing with all the hassle we got on on our first opening day, when we got every petty bureaucrat from cops to environmental health to the media turning up, summoned by an irritated neighbour." The cafe was run by rota, as most squat cafes are, with two collective members always there, even at night (no one lived there full-time). Tea, juice and vegan cake were available for a donation, and although the cafe wasn't always packed, the response was good. "We got to talk to people we wouldn't normally have gotten to speak to." The building was left after the agreed time of two and a half weeks, and the group will possibly squat again, despite the hard work involved. Contact: Norfolk EF!, The Greenhouse 42-46, Bethel Street, Norwich, NR2 1NR

Anarchist Teapot, Brighton

Squatting its first poxy little empty shop in Autumn 1996 and moving on through eight different buildings over the next two years, the Teapot experienced a wide range of horrors and successes. The first squats served more as a space for the counterculture to hang out, but after a while, a greater appeal to the general public was consciously aimed for. 'Nicer, cleaner' buildings were sought out and efforts were made to keep the cafe that way. Class War posters and anarchist literature didn't seem to be what intimidated potential punters, more so the countercultural aspects. Smelly dogs, loud music, cider and tie-dye wall hangings were thus purged, but not the politics. The cafe and library were open every day and most evenings saw a video showing, a discussion, a women-only night or a talk. In the long break after the last stint, the collective has moved on to other, less demanding projects whilst retaining the same name. Doing propaganda stalls at the local Sunday market, food stalls on a local shopping street and setting up as a mobile kitchen, "we realised that the Anarchist Teapot has actually changed a lot of Brighton peoples' perceptions of what anarchists are like." Contact: Box B, 21 Little Preston Street, Brighton BN1 2HQ, www.eco-action.org/teapot/

Worthing Anarchist Teapot

In Autumn 1998, Worthing Friends of the Earth were inspired by the Brighton squat cafes to open one themselves in the quiet streets of Worthing. After the eviction of the first centre, another two followed—not including an attempt at cracking a building and ending up being chased around town by an irate good citizen. The collective is made up of several people with families. Because the day-to-day running of a squat cafe demands more commitment and time, the collective have gone on to do regular tea and infostalls in town instead, taking furniture and tea outdoors to create 'front rooms' in the street or squatting the bandstand in the town centre for a day. Contact: PO Box 4144, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7NZ. teapot@worthing.eco-action.org



A-Spire's Spire



Circle A Cafe, Nottingham

"The Rainbow Centre has been open for 15 years. It was originally the HQ for CND stuff back in the '80s and now consists of a library, DTP room, offices and is home to Veggies catering campaign and generally used and abused by lots of other groups. We opened the Circle A Cafe in the Rainbow Centre because it wasn't being used by the public. It was becoming really insular and wasn't attracting any new interested people. We thought that the cafe could act as an easily approached gateway to the rest of the centre and would probably attract potentially interested peole in, while making some extra money to keep the centre open or channel into the chosen campaigns of the volunteers who did shifts. Although the cafe's not an official squat (we pay rent), the whole building's been condemned, so we reckon that entitles us to cool squat status. We wanted it to have an air of anarchy rather than servitude, so we put up big signs telling customers that it's a voluntarily run cafe and to do their own washing up if it looks busy. We formed a cafe collective which is basically a group of people who do one shift a week. On a shift you serve food (mostly vegan junk food), clean up and answer the telephone. We have meetings once a month to slag each other off and moan. The constant problem is not having enough volunteers to keep it open every day. People tend to do shifts for a few months and then get fucked off with it and never come back. I don't think any of us really think that the cafe is a particularly effective way of getting more people involved with activism, but it is a good way to introduce people to the concept of anarchy. Our customers range from activists, people with kids, Big Issue vendors and farmers, to businessmen, elderly people and students. To sum the cafe up: It's an anarchist pure vegetarian greasy spoon cafe pushing crap music and dodgy propaganda to the riffraff that walk through the door. We do it because we've got the best eco-anarchist resource centre in the country to keep open, we're addicted to free tea, we've got lousy taste, and we're too stubborn to stop." Contact: The Rainbow Centre, 182 Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3HW



OKasional Cafe, Manchester

The first OKasional Cafe was initiated by Manchester EF! in January 1998. This ran for a month, then there was a break, then another one was opened for a month in July, which moved straight on to another one which was evicted in September 1998. Eventually, they re-squatted the original building next to the university.

They squatted buildings "which had important points to be made about their use" as one collective member put it. The squats were intended mainly to get political ideas across through socialising, as political groups in Manchester were quite inaccessible. They also tried to use the media to attract attention, appearing on BBC TV and in the papers, which some say worked for them. Contact: Manchester EF!, Dept. 29, 255 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 5LW

As one Manchester squatter said: "You learn so much in such a short time about so many things, from DIY through to networking. I think every town should have a squat centre. They build up a lot of excitement, and it's a positive action that speaks for itself, you're doing something on your own terms."

Other Contacts

including non-squatted autonomous social centres:

Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh, 17 West Montgomery Place, Edinburgh EH7 5HA, 0131 557 6242

Kebele Community Centre, 14 Robertson Road, Eastville, Bristol BS5 6JY, kebele@mailexcite.com, 0117 939 9469

121 Centre, 121 Railton Road, Brixton, London SE24, 0171 274 6655

1 in 12 Club, 21-23 Albion Street, Bradford BD1 2LY, 01274 734160

No Rent, No Government
Stories of Squatting

Ever since property was established, vast numbers of people have ended up without a fair share and often, without a home. And ever since, vast numbers of people have discovered empty properties, be it land, huts, houses or castles, and decided to settle there, even if obviously not invited to. That's what squatting basically is—using a disused space. Most visibly in this century, squatting has been the basis of social movements. Individuals and groups have turned squatting into a political statement, engaged collectively in struggles against landlords, councils and the state, and have consciously created autonomous zones and defended them.

Imagine England after the Second World War—total devastation, food shortages and lots of weary disillusioned foot soldiers returning to this after years of bombings and blackouts. Many were trying to start families but there was a massive housing shortage. Seeing landlords keeping properties unoccupied, many decided to squat, often with the help of 'Vigilante' self-help groups on the south coast and in the large cities—the idea of direct action for homes began to spread.

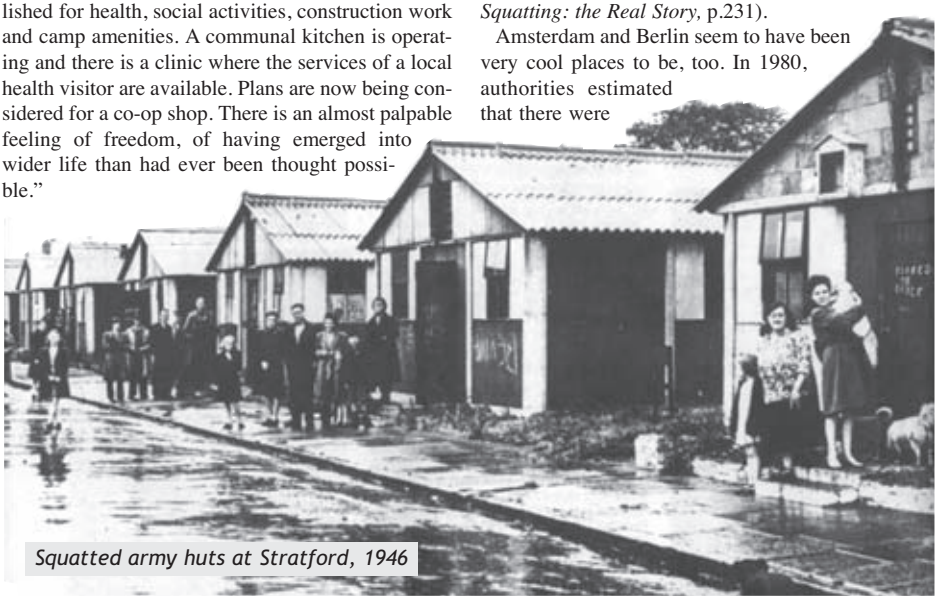
In 1946, when homelessness was at unprecedented heights in the UK, a family moved into the officers' mess of an unoccupied army camp near Scunthorpe. The news got round quickly and other families joined, and more and more camps were taken over—in the course of a few months, 45,000 people were thought to be living at 1,000 sites. The camps were large and makeshift but the spirit of DIY took hold. *The News Chronicle* (20/8/46) quoted a squatter as saying: "Only a few days passed before the chaos started to sort itself out. Subcommittees were established for health, social activities, construction work and camp amenities. A communal kitchen is operating and there is a clinic where the services of a local health visitor are available. Plans are now being considered for a co-op shop. There is an almost palpable feeling of freedom, of having emerged into wider life than had ever been thought possible."

Obviously, the camps were harassed by local authorities, but there was often huge local support, flocking to defend the squats, and the government didn't really know how to handle the situation. They finally opted to leave the families, passing management over to the local councils who would collect rent and rates.

The squatting continued though, with high profile mass takeovers of luxury flats and empty hotels in London to protest against housing policies. Organised workers went on strike in support of the occupations. But this movement quickly lost its basis, through a vicious media campaign and the alienation and various fuckups caused by Communist Party involvement, so the squatters retreated.

Squatting remained popular in the UK—in 1975, for example, 200-300 houses were squatted in Bristol, 150 in Brighton, 130 in Manchester and 100 in Leicester, to name but a few towns. A 1977 survey revealed 1,850 squats in London (according to *Squatting: the Real Story,* p.231).

Amsterdam and Berlin seem to have been very cool places to be, too. In 1980, authorities estimated that there were



Squatted army huts at Stratford, 1946



6,000-7,000 squats in Amsterdam alone. There was also a time in Kreuzberg, a poor Berlin district, when houses were squatted at a rate of one a day.

You'd find squat bars, workshops, women-only squats, co-op stores, a city farm, DIY healthcentres, creches and alternative schools, infocentres, printshops, pirate radio stations, cafes, advice drop-ins, even a cinema (in Berlin)—a functioning infrastructure for the various neighbourhoods that developed. This proved useful for summoning the crowds to defend the autonomous zones. If word got round that a large squat was threatened with eviction, everyone would come. The crowd unleashed its uncontrollable dynamic and you can feel, reading the accounts, the exhilaration of being able to fight off scores of riot police or the victory of re-squatting a building. Tactics were focused around these large numbers. Barricades were erected in the streets (strategically placed or spontaneous), houses were fortified with everything from welded steel sheets and barbed wire to anti-tear gas curtains, ammunition was stockpiled, and weak points in the police presence attacked, e.g. their vehicles.

Christiania was the name given to a 54-acre squat near the centre of Copenhagen, Denmark. It used to be a naval barracks until abandoned in 1970, and was soon taken over by squatters. The area includes large barrack blocks and halls, small huts, a beautiful lake, and trees and grass were planted. A long term autonomous zone, it obviously faced internal disappointments and difficulties. In his autobiography *I Couldn't Paint Golden Angels*, the anarchist Albert Meltzer dismissed it as "…a dropout's utopia. They made and sold handicrafts, lived and worked communally and so long as they stayed within bounds could smoke pot freely. Big deal." (p.346). But the defence plan the squatters devised when facing eviction in 1976 was even described by a former chief of the NATO Defence College in Rome as sound, extraordinarily intelligent and strategically well-thought through. It involved sirens and a sophisticated telephone network alarming people, physically blockading Copenhagen's bridges, railtracks and airport runways, bonfires in the streets, traffic disruption, pirate radio interference with local stations, and taxis being asked to converge on Christiania. Considering that a demonstration in support of the squatters had drawn 30,000 people, it certainly seemed feasible at least in numbers. The government backed down before this was tried, though, and allowed Christiania to remain.



No. 144 Piccadilly is evicted after much 'anti dirty squatters' media hype in London, 1969



Converted skips full of armed cops are lowered on to the roofs in Amsterdam, 1980.

As to tactics in Holland, the book *Cracking the Movement* by Adilkno points out, "The squatters discovered the three central principles of fortification formulated by Marshal Vauban at the end of the 17th century and put them into practice. Vauban proposed that defence should take place on a number of lines placed behind the other; that the particular characteristics of the place should be employed in entrenchment and the eventuality of sorties (counterattacks); and that an imbalance should be created between entrance and exit—it must be difficult to get in and easy to get out." (p.49) The strategies of offensive resistance were also carried into campaigns against various unwanted neighbourhood developments. Buildings were squatted and often successfully defended on the route of proposed roads, hotels and offices which would demolish low-cost housing. In both Holland and Germany, actions were carried out



constantly, often in retaliation, e.g. after most of the frequent raids on Berlin squats, some bank window or the council buildings would be trashed.

The squatters were organising themselves, for example in the SOK, the Amsterdam squatters council, or through the Berlin weekly newsletter *BesetzerPost* which had a print-run of 5,000.

Squatting wasn't just about housing, it was about making your life part of a wider political struggle. Solidarity was strong within what could be called an anticapitalist movement. On the announcement of the death of an ex-Red Army Faction member Sigmund Depus in 1980, the Berlin squat bars emptied into the streets. This ended with 80% of the windows on the two mile long consumer shrine, the Kudamm, being smashed. And during the British miners strike in 1984, the Amsterdam support committee raised money and organised holidays for miners' children from Derbyshire. "Some of them are sailing, others are at the anarchist camp in Appelscha, and others live at squats with Dutch families for a week." (*Black Flag*, Autumn 1984, p.5) But then again, squatting wasn't confined to anarchists—a large tower block was squatted by a few hundred fascists in the early '90s in Berlin!

Movements tend to reach a peak and then ebb. The reasons for this are always varied and difficult to pinpoint. The activities of the squatters obviously threatened the power of property speculators, developers and local councils. Repression and brute force discouraged a few squatters, but strengthened the determination of others. Many squats were offered negotiations for legalisation by the respective town councils. This managed to divide the movement into those willing to negotiate and those who weren't. It provoked discussions about radicalness and quashed joint action. An analysis in *Squatting in West Berlin* points out that, to a certain extent, both points of view have been verified by events. Only the legalised houses were able to hold on to their free space, but the confrontational movement was killed. The media did its best to influence the course of things—misrepresenting and dividing the squatters into violent thugs and peaceful young people.



Barricades cleared after Dutch eviction, 1980

Especially in the Netherlands, what had once been a broad-based spontaneous movement grew into an increasingly fragmented scene. People knew each other well, hung out together, which is nice but as so often happens this turned into an inward-looking subculture—not welcoming to the inexperienced newcomer. Jargon and shared views or petty arguments developed which excluded outsiders.

These are only a few examples. The various squatting movements involved tens of thousands of people over the years. They inspired self-organisation and diverse uses of space, the occupation of empty houses as protest against housing shortages or as resistance to unwanted urban developments, and the employment of different tactics to defend the space, from barricading and sitting on roofs, stocking up on ammunition and streetfighting, to drumming up local support. It was the networking and solidarity between the squatters as well as their determination that made all this possible.





Practical Squatting


ammunition

In England and Wales, squatting is not a crime. Basically, if you can get into a building without causing any obvious criminal damage and secure it, it's legally your home. You have the right to postal delivery, services like electricity and gas, rubbish collection and privacy. It's up to the owners to obtain a possession order and only then can you be evicted. Even the infamous Criminal Justice Act of 1994 did not render squatting illegal. The only difference is that now fast track evictions are possible under specific circumstances—if there's someone unable to move in because you're there, an Interim Possession Order (IPO) is issued.

1) Finding a place and getting in:

Have a stroll round the area you'd like to live in and find an empty house (there are always loads). Make sure it's empty! Avoid the obviously totally trashed places unless you like living without water or electricity. Check out possible entrances—is that a wooden door that would be easy to crowbar round the back, or are there only huge fuckoff firedoors? Is that door only locked with a Yale you could slip? What about the windows—could you slip the latches with a blunt flat knife? Even if the windows are boarded up, they usually don't bother with first floor windows so they're do-able with a ladder. When you're going out to crack a squat, go with a couple of mates. It doesn't have to be in the dark of night when neighbours are actually more easily alerted. Go only with the necessary equipment, well concealed, and try not to look too dodgy as the police could stop you. You could get done on suspicion of going equipped for breaking and entering.

2) Securing:

Once you're in, it's best to change the locks as soon as possible—chisel the old ones out and replace with a new one of similar size. The important thing is to make sure the owner can't just walk in and thus repossess the building, so a few bolts could do the job at first, or even just latching the Yale lock if there's one. You can put up a Legal Warning based on Section 6 of the Criminal Law Act 1977, which can be helpful for dealing with the police or owners.

3) Dealing with the police/owners:

The police have no legal right to enter a squat unless they have a warrant. They can't really do much to you unless they randomly decide you're very bad which is when they'll point out some spurious or possibly blatant criminal damage or whatever and try to arrest you. However, this doesn't happen often. Be firm but polite and explain through the letter box or window that you're squatting, hand them a legal warning and point out that the owner must go through the legal proceedings to evict you. The latter also applies to dealing with the owner.

4) Making it home:

Move your stuff in. Don't leave the building unattended especially if haven't had a police/owner visit yet. Register gas and/or electricity (important if you don't want to be arrested on grounds of 'stealing electricity'). Turn on the water. Clean up. Try to get the neighbours on your side by going round, being generally pleasant and explaining your situation.

5) Legal proceedings:

If the owner's on the case s/he will take you to Court, i.e. a Court Order will be delivered to your door. Get in touch with the ASS (see 'Further Advice') who can help you decide if you have a case in Court or if there's no use going. If the Court grants the owner a possession order, the bailiffs will put it on their waiting list. You will get a notice for when they're coming, or you can ring up the Sheriff's Office and find out. Unless you desire the confrontation, move out and find another squat. All this should take anything upwards of 3-4 weeks.

Further Advice:

These are just the basics—everything you need to know can be found in the indispensable *Squatters Handbook*, available for £1 from the Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS). The ASS have gained experience over the last 20 years. They're the ones who'll decipher the legal terms on the Court papers for you and guide you through Court and squatting in general.

ASS—2 St Paul's Road, London N1 2QN,
Tel.: 0171-359 8814

Desire is Speaking
Utopian Rhizomes



'The similarity of squatters' cultures in various Western European countries is remarkable', I wrote in a report of a tour of my band in May 1995 through four or five different West European countries. The buildings, music, clothes, codes, and of course, the inevitable dogs, are practically the same everywhere. Can it be that the dominant West European mass culture produces its own subculture? Isn't it time for something new?' This observation points to the existence of a West (and increasingly East) European network of people who do not necessarily know each other, but share ideals, practices and preferences that are different and opposed to the dominant culture. A network of bands, squats, zines, labels, mail orders, newsgroups, and people.

The '70s are generally considered to be the last 'utopian period'[1]. After the failure of the near-revolution of 1968 it became clear that the spectacle transforms each of our desires into something it can cope with. The spontaneous explosion of desires was absorbed through student councils, democratic reforms, wage increases, employee participation and freedom of the press. In the Netherlands, the actions of the Provos and Kabouters were overruled by Marxist student leaders and the politicians of the New Left. The desires became harmless, the utopian moment passed by.

After the utopian period of Love and Peace, the '80s with all its 'No Future' attitude can be considered to be an atopia. With their dark clothes and nihilistic attitude, punks were not exactly flower children. They had no poetic vision of the future. Only the here and now existed, and the notion that you have to make the best out of that. If the system sucks, create something yourself, something different, something better or at least something more fun.

When mainstream punk died a few years after it appeared on stage, the punk movement could start. Bands sprouted like weeds because according to the DIY ethos of punk anyone can play: you're a musician if you want to, not because a producer of a record company or journalist says so. With the bands came the venues, labels, rehearsal rooms, mail orders, zines. An inspiring underground culture appeared, while the media had lost their interest.

The same can be said for the squatters' movement. In Holland, and also abroad, the punk and the squatters' movements of the '80s were very much interwoven. Especially in the beginning, punk bands depended on squats for their gigs. If a huge house was occupied, the first thing you did was open a bar and try to create a gig space where (punk) bands could play. Famous in Amsterdam were the Emma—



a huge warehouse, and the music studio—Jokes Koeienverhuurbedrijf. Not just Amsterdam, but many other towns had their own squats with gig spaces as well. Some of these have been legalized, others still exist as squats, or have disappeared. Nowadays they don't only feature punk bands, because in the end, even squatters learned to dance to techno and jungle.

The squatters' movement did not only offer space for bands but for a lot of other things as well. It was supposed to have died in 1984, after the eviction of a huge squat called the Wyers[2]. I always considered this notion funny, because I arrived in Amsterdam in 1984 and since then the main part of my life has taken place in squats or legalized squats. Most of my friends used to live in squatted houses, and we frequented squatted bars, discos, gig venues and restaurants. Almost everything you needed or wanted could be found in squatted buildings, from grocery stores to saunas. Some of these facilities were especially directed at squatters, but a lot were also accessible to the general public. Back then it was no problem at all to live in what might be called a squatted zone for almost 24 hours a day; you could even travel to squats in other European countries in your holidays. You only dropped in at the dole office for this month's cash, or sometimes you got yourself a job (although this was not done back then).

Some people just squatted out of necessity, and for some it fitted into a broader ideology. But no matter how many squatters flirted with revolutionary ideas—for example, there were many support committees for the guerrillas in Central America, and some people went to Nicaragua to support the Sandinista revolution—most of them dissociated themselves from the theoretical discussions of young anarchists and communists in the '60s and '70s. Most squatters didn't want to change the world, but live their life here and now the way they chose to. If we can speak of any ideology, it was the ideology that there was none. As a female squatter said to a journalist of the newspaper de Volkskrant[3]: "Not an abstract ideal, nor the adherence to an ideology, or even a better society, but the improvement of a lousy personal situation. That is why I am involved."

Just as in the women's movement, the slogan 'the personal is political' was in vogue. Squatting and direct action became an attitude to life. Politics starts in you daily life, where power relations take hold, where you can start changing things and create room for different ways of living, working and relating to each other. In the squatters' magazine Bluf![4], someone said in an article called 'Utopia': "I feel at home in the squatters' movement because I can live and work there and be politically active, together with people who generally have no illusions, without getting stuck in a 'no-future' attitude. People who have no illusions about the welfare state regarding housing, work, culture, love and whatever else is for sale. No illusions about parliamentary politics. People who resist nonetheless, not against the establishment, nor randomly, but because they have their own ideas about how they want to live and who want to fight for a space to realise that. In short: people who do not want the patterns and perspectives of their lives being dominated by what society has to 'offer', but by their own insights and desires."

There are altogether less squats now than in the '80s, due to hassle through new laws which have resulted in quicker and easier evictions. A lot of squats only exist for a few months. The problem with this is that it's harder to create gig venues, cafes, shops and other facilities. At the end of the '80s and the beginning of this decade a lot of the projects and infrastructure of the squatters' movement disappeared or chose some legalized form to continue their activities. Some of the initiatives now make use of state-subsidized jobs, employing each other on workfare schemes. Squatters are idealistic, but also pragmatic, or perhaps 'strategic' is a better word here. In order to survive you have to use the various possibilities the system unintentionally offers you. But in Amsterdam it's still 'squatday' (squats are being opened) almost every Sunday, and many young people opt for the uncertain but exciting life in a squat.

According to social scientists and journalists[5], social movements are considered important when they play a role in the political arena, the media or both. The squatters' movement did so between 1976 and 1984, at least in Amsterdam. Squatters were large in number and well organised into neighbourhood groups; they had political impact and staged spectacular riots, and because of that, gained a lot of media attention. The squatters' movement disappeared as a political factor and as a media event after 1984, but the (new or legalized) squats and networks survived, and they turned out to be fertile soil for other initiatives and experimental ways of life.[6]

Out of the squatters' movement came a network of squats, communally owned houses, food co-ops, LET-systems, soundsystems, bands, mailorders, festivals, direct-action groups, research groups, no-paper (immigration) groups, publishers, magazines,



internet providers and newsgroups, infoshops, people's kitchens, mobile kitchens etc. Within this movement, a few thousand people are on the move. A lot of people are disappointed that there isn't a shared utopia anymore, no expectation of a better future. According to some of them, the shared utopian vision has always been 'the core of left politics, and that has to stay that way.'[7] Well, if this is true, then perhaps the movement isn't 'left' anymore. But the dischord with the existing order and the desire to create something different here and now still remains. The shared utopia disappeared, but the utopian practices didn't.

At the moment, when 'neo-liberalism' is the only ideology and the market economy has colonized everything—even our genes—these practices show us possibilities for other ways of living, other economies, or even the end of economy. There is an ongoing discussion about the necessity of creating an alternative economy that is less dependent on the mainstream market and the state. The Dutch VAK-group, for example—a federation of houses, studios, work places, companies, a farm and financial institutions—strives towards an alternative infrastructure based on anarchist ideas, such as local democracy and federation. By supplying financial means, skills, experiences and other services, new projects can be supported and existing projects can network. Another example of an alternative economic system is the flourishing LET-schemes, local exchange systems without money, based on trading skills.

Desire, however, doesn't know exchange, but only theft and gift. The market economy expands by appropriating things which were freely available before. It is only after claiming exclusive ownership that things can be bought and sold. In this context, de-economizing is the breaking down of exclusive ownership: the reclaiming of public and private spaces, goods and provisions. The struggle against the economization of our daily lives is not merely a struggle against the market, but against economy itself, against the notion of scarcity. Most of the movement's practices are based on this notion of abundance.

According to the squatting movement, there are enough places to live in; you only need to occupy them. Punk and DIY culture show that anyone can make music, records, organise gigs, make 'zines, just do it. Like primitives, travellers are the hunters and gatherers of contemporary wild nature: the technological megacity, which offers more than enough waste to live on. The refugee aid movement or no-paper groups (supporting illegal immigrants) show that hospitality 'costs' nothing, but is a way to meet new friends, come into contact with other cultures and enhance your experience. Queers show that there is more than heterosexuality or homosexuality, more than man and woman. A collective like Rampenplan, which consists of a mobile kitchen, a publisher and a direct action video group, shows that it is possible to cook organic meals based on the principle of a 'fair' price and in doing so generate money for other projects, without expecting anything in return. Even the LET-schemes, which use the principle of exchange, are based on the notion that everybody has some skills to offer somebody else, on abundance instead of scarcity. But most important is that the movement shows that you can have fun doing what you do. That you can play instead of work.



So what kind of community is the Dutch movement? It is clear that people participate together in direct actions and demonstrations, read the same magazines, go to the



same bars, gigs and festivals and some of them live together in squats or communally owned houses. They certainly meet. But they also meet people 'outside'; they attend schools or universities, or have a job. Hardly anyone is a full-time squatter anymore. You can live in a squat and study and work and play in a band and make love with men and women…

Although there are always people who try to formulate criteria as to who is 'inside' and who is not, the 'movement' of the '90s is relatively open, and because of that also lacks the sometimes suffocating pressure towards uniformity, which was characteristic of the social movements of the '70s and '80s, like the women's and gay movements, and also the squatters' movement.

What we see here is not a community, nor solidarity groups, but configurations of desire: networks of friendship and expression which undermine the prevailing relations of production, society, politics, family, the body, sex and even the cosmos. Lacking a single clear goal or programme, we see a multitude of struggles. There is no utopian tree from which readymade ideas about another world can be picked, but endless rhizomes on which at unexpected moments flowers appear.

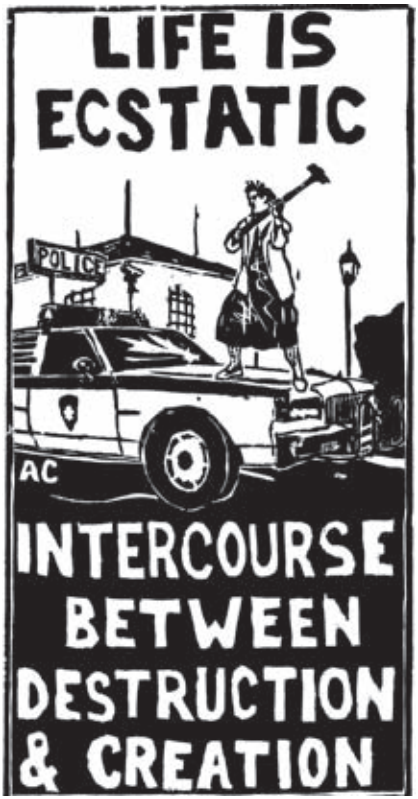
The concept of rhizomes, modelled on the strange root systems of certain plants, was introduced by the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. They're opposed to the tree, which stands for the dominant Western reality and all of Western thought, from botany to biology and anatomy, and also gnosticism, theology, ontology, philosophy. The tree exists in a hierarchical order of a central trunk with larger and smaller branches. The trunk forms the connection between all parts, thus in a way limiting connections. A rhizome, on the contrary, can be connected with any other at any point. A tree can be cut down, whereas rhizomes are much less subject to destruction. Rhizomes can grow again along another line if broken at some point. Rhizomes are abundant; if weeded out in one place, they will definitely show up somewhere else. Rhizomes are endless, as are desire and the imagination.

So utopianism didn't disappear after the '70s, it's everywhere—sometimes hidden, sometimes exposed. It can't be exterminated, because it's like a weed. It's the voice of desire and the imagination in a world dominated by material interests and reason. Like weeds, desire can be 'cultivated' for a shorter or longer period, it can be locked up within political organisations or single issue groups, but it can never be weeded out. In some periods it's more underground, voluntarily so or because the state or political organisations (right or left) force it to be. But it will always find a way to break out. It will always find a hole to break through and flow free, a hole in the spectacle, temporarily or permanent.

submitted by 'Ravage', bi-weekly magazine, Van Ostadestraat 233n, 1073 TN Amsterdam, Holland

Footnotes

1 Saskia Poldervaart, 'Anti-utopisten maken zich er gemakkelijk vanaf' in 'de Volkskrant', June 1998
2 See Virginia Mamadouh, 'De stad in eigen hand', Amsterdam 1992.
3 8 March, 1980
4 No. 79, 28 September, 1983
5 Scum [editor's comment]
6 I prefer not to use the word 'lifestyle', because its meaning has been obscured, both by marketeers and the American social ecologist Murray Bookchin. See his essay 'Social anarchism or lifestyle anarchism, an unbridgeable chasm', AK Press 1995.
7 Ronald van Haasteren *et al* in 'Het Gelijk…uitnodiging tot een debat', Papieren Tijger 199



War is the Health of the State

An Open Letter to the UK Direct Action Movement



From members of the Brighton and Hove Stop the War Committee

On March 24th, 1999 Britain went to war. It was a war in which Britain and its NATO allies bombed Serbia into submission. Warplanes, many of which took off from bases in Britain, systematically destroyed Serbia's infrastructure killing hundreds of civilians in the process and doing untold damage to the environment in the Balkans. Chemical factories, prisons, hospitals, housing estates and bridges were all bombed.

It was a war that precipitated the very humanitarian disaster that it was ostensibly designed to prevent: mass ethnic cleansing. What was a low intensity war before the bombing began, in which dozens were being killed every month, was transformed into one in which hundreds of thousands were driven from their homes and thousands were executed.

Yet what did the direct action movement do to oppose this war? Absolutely nothing. This abysmal failure to mount any kind of opposition to the war exposes important weaknesses we simply cannot ignore.

The Hypocrisy of Humanitarianism

First, let us be clear and say that the war was not fought for humanitarian reasons. Before the bombing commenced, there was no mass exodus of refugees. Yet the moment the NATO campaign began, Milosevic unleashed his military forces to the full.

The media were surprised by this brutal reaction. Yet in Washington, a Defence Department spokesman seemed unmoved: "In the Pentagon, in this building, we were not surprised by what Milosevic has done. I think there is historical amnesia here if anyone is surprised by the campaign [of ethnic cleansing]". And Clare Short, Old Labour turned warmonger, said on TV that if the West had been seen to prepare for the predicted influx of refugees, people might have assumed this to be "the inevitable effect of NATO's bombing action." In other words, screw looking after the refugees that the government knew would be created, just keep domestic public opinion pacified.

It's only one aspect of the hypocrisy that was used to justify the war. Readers of this magazine will be aware of the genocide that took place in Rwanda in 1994—one million dead and the West did nothing. Or the savagery with which the Turkish state militarily deals with the Kurds (Turkey is a member of NATO, so best forget about that). Or the fact that Israel consistently violates UN Security Council resolutions, bombs the Lebanon when it feels like it,



and violently oppresses the Palestinians, who were kicked off their land in much the same way the Kosovars were. But then Israel is America's major ally in the oil-rich Middle East.

What Was the War About? And Why Was it so Important?

There is no doubt that the war was an extremely complex issue, one that many people had a hard time understanding. In fact, most people in the direct action scene did not even seem to think it was worth the effort at all. More than a few went out of their way to avoid the problem, knowing it could cause a politically divisive argument. Here was a situation where the British state was raining bombs on Serb civilians, many of whom had in the past taken to the streets and struck work to oppose Milosevic's nationalism, while in Britain people who normally claimed to be 'political' walked around as if nothing was happening.

It was partly from an understandable feeling of powerlessness. The anti-war movement, which we shall look at below, was small. It looked as if there was never any realistic chance of militant direct action stopping the war. But it was also from a lack of understanding of the war and its ramifications, and a refusal to confront difficult issues.

So what was the war about, if not humanitarianism? And why was it so important to oppose it?

It was not a war for resources. With The Gulf War in 1991 it was obvious that the US, Britain et al were going to war because of oil. In Kosova, this was not the case. Kosova has historically been by far the poorest part of the former Yugoslavia. Some who opposed the war argued that Kosova has huge timber and mineral resources, but these are hardly the sort of things that send American bombers into the air. Others brought in the issue of oil under the Caspian Sea and a possible pipeline through a western-controlled Kosova. But Kosova is nowhere near the Caspian Sea and surely has absolutely no strategic importance when it comes to extracting this oil. In fact it was this lack of resources that strengthened the hand of the state in arguing that they were intervening purely on moral grounds.

The war in Kosova was a war for influence—the continuing, renewed influence of the US in Europe. This is the core of the matter. Ever since World War II, one of the central pillars of US foreign policy has been to lock as much of Europe as possible into the American world of 'free' capital, and the fall of Eastern bloc state capitalism has not changed this.

NATO's original function was ostensibly that of a defensive military alliance protecting Western Europe from Soviet aggression guaranteeing as a result that the region remained a stable, capital-accumulating zone. But it also ensured that within the NATO countries inter-imperialist rivalries were subsumed to the common task—a function it still performs.

Since the fall of the USSR and the Warsaw Pact NATO has appeared redundant to many. Yet it is expanding: Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are all recent members. Why is this? Post-Cold War, economic rivalries between America and Europe are

Sowing a Harvest of Death

Adem Muncaj, an ethnic Albanian boy from Kosova, recently found a bright orange container that looked like a soft drink can and brought it home to his family. Unfortunately it was a British-made RBL-755 cluster bomb dropped by NATO warplanes on his village of Velika Jabalanica. Adem, his brother and mother, his uncle and aunt and their three daughters were all killed when the 'soft drink' can exploded. If his mother or aunt were within a metre or two of the bomb when it went off their internal organs such as the brain, liver or lungs would have imploded due to the force of the blast. If his brother or uncle were, say, 15 or 20 metres away at the time of the blast they would have had their limbs ripped apart and been hit in the stomach or head by bomb shrapnel.

The cluster bombs used by NATO contain 147 'sub-projectiles' or tiny bombs. Each of these on hitting a person will cause a wound 30 times larger than the projectile itself. Some of these cluster bombs have hit villages, markets and hospitals, people travelling in buses and cars. Thousands of unexploded cluster bombs now litter Kosova, waiting to be discovered, picked up or stumbled upon. Some of the bombs even have a timer so they can go off several hours or days after they hit the ground; set to kill and maim long after the conflict is forgotten here in the West.

According to the US Defence Department "the best pilots in the world" have flown some 18,000 missions over Yugoslavia and dropped some 9,000 cluster bombs as well as bunker bombs, depleted-uranium bombs, graphite bombs, laser-guided bombs and satellite-guided bombs upon the people of Yugoslavia.

Source: *Third World Resurgence*, No. 106 (June 1999), pp. 37-8

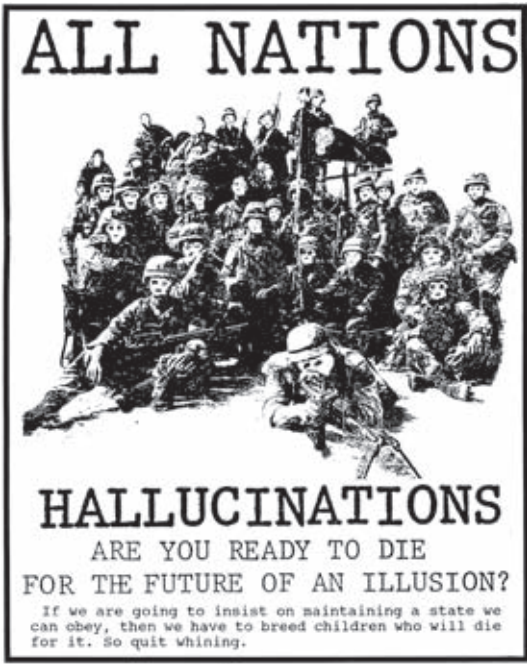


coming out. The recent trade wars over bananas, hormone-treated beef, and the imposition of genetically modified food are all evidence of rivalry between two powerful economic blocks. And the rivalries are not just economic. Germany, now re-unified and re-militarised is becoming a powerful political competitor to US interests in Europe. With their economic influence being challenged, it is important to the US that they remain militarily dominant.

However, it is difficult to justify an expanding military alliance when there are no obvious enemies. Kosova gave NATO and America the chance to both justify itself and to prove that it could act independently without interference, particulary from Russia.

There is no doubt that NATO wanted war. At the Rambouillet negotiations which immediately preceded the bombing, Yugoslavia was presented with a treaty that was a deliberate provocation. NATO demanded free access to the whole of Yugoslav territory (ie Serbia as well as Kosova and Montenegro). This would mean an end to Yugoslavia's sovereignty—a demand that no politician, of whatever nation-state, could accept. And now, with the 'successful' conclusion of the war (i.e: no US soldiers killed, the apparent capitulation of Milosevic), NATO has won itself a new autonomy to act anywhere, unilaterally, wherever the US deems its interests are threatened.

It is a dangerous precedent that guarantees future conflicts. And it is a precedent that the direct action movement completely failed to grasp.


ALL NATIONS
HALLUCINATIONS
ARE YOU READY TO DIE
FOR THE FUTURE OF AN ILLUSION?
If we are going to insist on maintaining a state we can obey, then we have to breed children who will die for it. So quit whining.

The Anti-War Movement

There can be no doubt that the anti-war movement in Britain was hardly inspiring. (In other parts of Europe—Germany, Greece, Italy—it was different). The initial signs were good. A ten thousand strong demonstration in London the day after the bombing started, demos in Oxford and Birmingham, well-attended public meetings called by the anti-war groups that had formed in most cities. However, this start was never built on. With the liberal media's onslaught in favour of the war; with politicians aggressively accusing anyone who opposed the war of being appeasers, complicit with the 'Nazi' Milosevic; with images of refugees beamed into our homes nightly, it was extremely difficult to take an anti-war position.

The problem was not so much convincing people that the bombing was wrong (few people on the streets were prepared to put up much of an argument for the war), rather it was that people could not see the possibility of any real opposition to the war developing—an opposition that the direct action movement could have played an indispensable role in developing.

What made matters worse was that there was very little opposition from the traditional liberal-left anti-war movement. If you visited the Peace and Environment Centre in Brighton, for instance, you would have been hard pushed to find out a war was going on at all. They were more concerned about selling tickets for Glastonbury.

This left a fairly sorry crowd to form the anti-war groups. In Brighton the group was made up of a few die-hard pacifists, the SWP and various unaligned (and confused) individuals. Hardly a welcoming committee! Yet the group, at least at the start, did talk about direct action. Occupying roads or blockading the Territorial Army barracks were discussed. There was also the possibility of getting people to RAF Fairford where the B-52 bombers were departing from. But with no other activists turning up to meetings, and most people in the group over forty, with little or no experience of direct action, it never happened.



The Direct Action Response to the Bombing

The direct action movement is well aware of its strengths, and these should not be underestimated. A commitment to direct action cuts through all the endless debates we find in the traditional left. It avoids many of the compromises campaigns make to 'get people on our side', in favour of convincing people by example—propaganda by deed. The movement has a strength in diversity which enables it to take up a range of issues and set its own agenda. And it has the imagination to develop new tactics that can make effective use of limited numbers. All these strengths have been evident in the successful anti-roads struggle and the recent actions against the biotechnology industry.

The problem is that it is, to a large extent, based on a personal commitment stemming from a 'moral liberalism.' What do we mean by this? The direct action scene is sustained mainly by the dole. This provides a 'neutral' baseline, which we do not have to relate to in the way that we would have to relate to work (i.e: collectively) and from where people feel free to make a moral, personal choice about which campaigns to get involved with. Politics is no longer a necessity, rather it is an option. In other words, and unlike the first half of the twentieth century, politics does not choose us—we choose politics. And with so many 'issues' around, fragmentation automatically happens.

Moral liberalism identifies something as 'bad'—bad for people, bad for the earth—and then tries to do something about it. The problem is that these simplistic terms are completely unable to cope with complex issues where 'good' and 'bad' are less clearcut. Because it is difficult, if not impossible, to compare the importance of issues simply on moral grounds (i.e. how 'bad' they are), every issue becomes as important as every other issue in the supermarket that is the direct action movement. In Brighton, it's seen most clearly at Rebel Alliance meetings, where the issues that are taken up depend only on personal tastes and fashions. Yet it was precisely this moral liberalism that Tony Blair used to justify the bombing. His appeal that we must 'do something, anything' is exactly the view many direct action people take towards the world as a whole.

As a result, the direct action movement is unable to develop a sense of collective priority or historical importance. By historical importance we mean an ability to recognise, not only our place in the ongoing struggle against capitalism (many direct action types are very informed about 'our' history), but the present stage, and most recent developments of capitalism. Sometimes—such as time of war—capitalism sets the agenda for us. And if we don't even understand that agenda, the whole direct action movement can become outdated and irrelevant.

June 18th—A Step Forward

Although June 18th was a global day of action, it is considered here from a purely British perspective. From this point of view we can see that June 18th came out of the feeling many activists had that Reclaim The Streets parties had got predictable—in fact, were going nowhere. It was a recognition that we need to constantly transform the way we protest.

There is no 'heart of capitalism.' It is a social relation and, as such, is not to be found solely in the factory, the money markets, the high street or the air base. But capitalism does develop and change and, since the end of the 1970s, the expansion of finance capital which shifts endlessly around the globe, regardless of borders, in the search for profit, has become an identifiable and definable phenomenon. And it was this specific targeting of finance capital as an important (not the most important, or the least important, but an important) part of the system that was the most exciting aspect of June 18th.

As for the day itself, which is well documented elsewhere in this magazine, all we can say is that it moved beyond the symbolism of protest into an actual challenge to that particular sector of capitalism. It was certainly a step beyond the individual campaigns into the idea of struggling, physically, together. As practical criticism it was excellent!

Our only criticism of June 18th is that, again considered from a purely British perspective, it seems to be contextless in terms of an ongoing campaign, as contrasted with e.g. the anti-Poll Tax struggle. Clearly it has come out of the anti-roads movement via Reclaim The Streets parties, but where does it go now? Unless another June 18th is organised, which at the present time does not seem likely, it leads nowhere but into prisoner support—a necessary but essentially defensive measure. And while we would say there has been a definite advance in grasping what capitalism is when a day of action is directed specifically against finance capital, can we say that the nature of the beast has really been grasped by the direct action movement when a European war is completely ignored? In other words, while some parts of the scene seem to have latched onto finance



capital as an explanation of capitalism they have failed to grasp the crucial point that war is one of capitalism's most basic forms.

However we can't be too hard on June 18th. At the time the idea was cooked up very little was going on nationally and it was an attempt to get something fairly coherent going on. For reasons explained above, we do not believe that, had June 18th not been such a focus for the direct action scene, activists would have moved en masse into the anti-war camp. We would only point out that many activists working non-stop for one day (however good it is) and who subsquently become burned out after that one day is over, is perhaps not a healthy use of our time.

A Human Reaction?

It wouldn't be entirely true to state that everyone involved in direct action was paralysed with inaction by the war. Some worked with those involved in Workers' Aid to Bosnia to send aid convoys to Kosova. The principle of international solidarity is one we advocate fully. During the Bosnian conflict, Workers' Aid had sent convoys to multi-ethnic places where the inhabitants were resisting the nationalism that was tearing other communities apart, and this is extremely important.

In Kosova, though, it was different. Multi-ethnic communities did not exist, and in any case, Kosova, being a war zone, was impossible to get into.

There are two points. The first is that those collecting for the convoys, genuine enough as they were, were falling victim to the same moral, good vs. bad judgements that were used by the government to defend the bombing. Instead of taking a little time to think about why the war had happened and what it meant, they had the kneejerk reaction that the media encouraged—a human enough response in view of the undoubted atrocities the Serb militias were com-

A Present For Your Children From The Caring NATO Forces

During the 1991 Gulf War over three hundred tonnes of Depleted Uranium (DU) was used in Iraq. DU is produced when enriched uranium is separated from natural uranium. Two and half times heavier than lead it is used to tip missiles and bullets to give them extra weight to help them punch holes in armour plating. On impact the DU metal oxidises and releases radioactive heavy metal particles into the atmosphere. DU is now in the soil, air and water in Iraq, and is believed to be a factor behind the increased levels of cancer of the lung and liver and kidney failure as well as a huge increase in incidences of congenital deformity.

In the maternity hospital in Basra in the South of Iraq, two or three children with cases of severe congenital abnormality are born every day. Most of them die within hours, some having been born with no skull, face or brain—and many with severe internal organ defects. The doctors keep a grisly photo archive. One young doctor, pregnant with her own child, was scanning herself daily for any sign of a problem, but for most the awful truth is found out too late…

During the Gulf War, the USA and Britain tested and used their DU weapons as a new technology. They have since sold it to many countries around the world and have used it in bombing Serbia—now facing many of the same problems as the people that live in Iraq.



Contact: Campaign Against Depleted Uranium, c/o Greater Manchester and District CND, One World Centre, 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS, UK
Tel: 0161 834 8301.
E-mail: gmdcnd@gn.apc.org



mitting. Nevertheless, it was a strange moment of activist and Prime Minister hysterically reinforcing each other. We argued, unpopularly at the time, that activists would be much better spending their time building an anti-war movement that would have challenged the centre of the problem. It was also a great opportunity to challenge New Labour's racist Asylum and Immigration Bill, which brutally clamps down even further on those who, fleeing persecution, end up in Britain.

We were accused of being cold, but in the face of the national celebrity appeals that were organised on behalf of the Kosovars, appeals that raised much more money than the direct action scene ever could, was it really worth the effort? Couldn't that energy have been better used elsewhere?

The second concern is where the Workers' Aid convoys ended up. Those direct action people who were wary of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) and their anti-war efforts should have checked first before they jumped into bed with the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP), who are the main grouping behind Workers' Aid. They are a Trotskyist sect who supported the Kosova Liberation Army against the Serbs and who notoriously refused to go on the anti-war demonstrations. As the convoys mainly ended up in Albania, the recruiting ground of the Kosova Liberation Army (KLA), it is not impossible that some of the aid ended up in KLA hands.

Support for the KLA?

Like the WRP, some activists even went as far as outright support for the KLA, though, when pressed, it seemed to be based on little more than romantic notions of armed struggle.

The KLA began its career with attacks on Serb refugees fleeing from Croatian ethnic cleansing in the Krajina region. Later they targeted Serb civilians as well as police—they have, for example, thrown grenades into crowded Serb cafes. More recently they have intercepted fleeing Kosovar refugee columns and pressganged the men into joining up. Soon, with different uniforms, they will be the police force and prison warders of the NATO protectorate that is Kosova.

Any radical factions were purged in autumn 1998 when the KLA was comprehensively reorganised following their summer defeat by the Serb military. Ultimately, wanting a Greater Albania, they are nothing more than another nightmare in the logic of ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. Already the Serb minority in Kosova have fled in advance of expected


"IS THIS GONNA BE ON THE TEST?"
MR. JONES... DO YOU THINK THE U.S. HAS A RIGHT TO PROTECT IT'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS EVEN IF IT MEANS GOING TO WAR.
HELL YES!
MR. JONES... WOULD YOU KILL FOR PEPSI?
GOSH! NOW THAT'S A TOUGH ONE!
ARE WE TALKIN' REGULAR OR DIET?
Sidewalk Bubblegum ©1999 Clay Butler

KLA reprisals, and some have been attacked and killed.

Support for the KLA is not only misguided, it is irresponsible and dangerous. Nationalism never has, and never will have, anything in common with anarchism, communism or radical ecology. In reality, according to London's Breakdown Notes, "national liberation consists of the liberation of the guerrilla chairman and his national police from the chains of powerlessness." And it consists of nothing else.

Strategy and Tactics

On an anecdotal level, the response to the anti-war movement reflected the unthought out and muddled response to the war itself. But one or two points came up again and again, and these we shall deal with by way of a conclusion.

One was the 'I don't want to sit in the same room as the SWP' argument. Of course, nobody wants to, but when a war is going on, it's not a question of choice. It's simply not good enough to have such an apolitical point of view when the state is flying bombing missions—in our name—on people who, when all is said and done, we have far more in common with than we ever will with 'our own' ruling class. Instead, we need to be in there, arguing our corner. The Leninists are a lot less influential than they were even ten years ago and because they need more friends, are less manipulative. That doesn't mean we can trust them, merely that, despite their current slump in fortunes, they will be around for a long time to come and we either learn to deal with them or we refuse to get involved in many important



struggles. Is that what we really want? After all, we saw them off in the anti-Criminal Justice Act campaign and we could do so, easily, again.

Another gripe was 'I don't want to go on boring marches.' Again, nobody wants to, and the anti-war demonstrations in London were certianly boring, attended as they were by a rearguard of Serb nationalists who nobody had the nerve to physically confront. But—and this may be news to some—demonstrations have not been invented specifically to piss off direct action people. They have been around for hundreds of years. Good demonstrations are places where the power and immediacy of the crowd becomes transparent, where the regular life of city streets is temporarily transformed. The state either allows the demonstration to go ahead—a sign, especially during an illegal gathering, of weakness; or it must attack the demonstration, revealing the authoritarianism at the heart of the modern liberal state. And an attack on, or by, a demonstration or gathering ensures that a symbolic event becomes a historical event. June 18th has already passed into history as an event to be remembered and celebrated, another passage in the struggle against capitalism.

There is a strategic point also. The anti-war movement that is usually cited as a model is Vietnam. But the Vietnam war had been going for years before any real opposition developed. In these days of high-tech weaponry and an expanded NATO, wars have usually been concluded within a few weeks—months at the most. It's therefore imperative to organise as quickly as possible, and traditional demos can be an important forum, bringing people immediately together to forge new links and find out what is happening in other parts of the country. And let's not forget what happens when traditional demonstrations are swamped by people who refuse the constraints of the leftists. The anti-Poll Tax march was called by the Militant-dominated All-Britain Federation and we all remember what happened in London that day.

Of course some demonstrations (small, quiet and saturated with Trots) leave a bad taste in the mouth and can be very dispiriting. But we must not fetishise the actions we are prepared to take as activists. It is this fetishism on road camps that emphasises the monkeywrenching, the climbing, the tunnelling, while (sometimes) insultingly referring to building support in the community—without which you can never win—as 'outreach.'

The national roads building programme is dead; many activists are getting the feeling that street parties are past their sell-by date; June 18th represents a real step forward, yet there has been a European war with barely a peep from the direct action movement.

And it is a movement, which is why it is worth arguing over. We must decide what we are. Are we militant liberals with a purely green agenda capable of making only the simplest moral decisions? Or are we serious about confronting the complexities and difficult situations that capitalism presents us with? Most importantly, having dealt with these complexities, are we willing to prioritise our actions?

And this last point must be said loud and clear. Not all issues are equal. Some are more important than others. Subvertising billboards is not as important as opposing war. Having an enjoyable street party is not as important as opposing opencast mining.

If the direct action movement, with its vital innovations and uncompromising attitude stays fragmented internally, and isolated in relation to other social struggles, if it does not learn to prioritise, we will go walkabout at precisely the vital moment and will have enabled capitalism to proceed apace with the destruction of humanity and the planet.

You can contact the authors of this article at: Brighton and Hove Stop the War Committee, c/o PO Box 2536, Rottingdean, Brighton BN2 6LX.



Carry On Camping
A Round-up of British Action Camps



Since the last issue of Do or Die (printed April 1998) there have been 34 direct action protest sites in the UK. This section lists the camps that have been set up or have continued to be occupied in the last year—some are still there now, some have won, some have been evicted. The most noticeable thing over the last year or so is that sites tend to be smaller, and they are diversifying away from roads—testament to the decimation of the roads budget. The remains of the once-huge roads programme were slashed even further in the '98 Roads Review. Only 37 schemes—including M25 widening and Bingley—are planned for the next 7 years, with over 100 scrapped, deferred, or given to local authorities to worry about. Birmingham is really the only large anti-roads camp there has been in the last year (and that's privately financed!)—Lyminge, Crystal Palace and Manchester were all fighting other things apart from roads. We tend to be fighting housing developments or leisure complexes as much as roads now. Another step forward is the anti-genetix crop squat… With camps all over the country there is bound to be one near you, so go to stay or to visit, and help barricade, dig, fortify and generally cause trouble!

⛺ marks those camps which are current at time of going to press (August '99).

Scotland



Faslane Peace Camp ⛺

Despite 80% opposition to nukes in Scotland, Faslane, on the river Clyde, is home to all Britain's nuclear submarines—now including the brand spanking new *Vengeance,* a snip at £1000m. Faslane Peace Camp has been there for over 16 years opposing the subs, and is still going strong. As reported in the last DoD, the council were planning to evict the campers, and in July '98 eventually won their legal appeal to be able to do so. However after seeing the formidable camp defences on telly, the cash-strapped local council agreed to talks with residents to try to find an amicable (and cheaper!) solution.

Meanwhile, campers continue to cause merry hell with the laughable base 'security': breaking in to play football, blockading the gates, delaying warhead convoys and disrupting the sailing of the Trident subs. Large sections of the base fence have



also vanished… So come and visit Faslane for fun and defiance by the Gareloch.

Contact: Faslane Peace Camp, Shandon, Helensburgh, Dunbartonshire, Scotland, G84 8HT. 01436 820 901



The North

Victory in Derby!

Protesters who had been protecting the Bass Recreation Park in Derby city centre since February '98 came down from the treetops in September, following a council decision to change the road plans, saving Derby's last bit of green space. The council was planning to stick a road across the site and the park was under threat of sale to private developers with plans to turn it into a shopping centre. The park contains a Grade 1 wildlife site and gives many diverse species a place in common: water and land plants, kingfishers, local walkers, footballers…

Protestors had occupied the site since February '98. There were regularly about 20 people on site and there was enthusiatitic local support. A petition of over 11,000 signitures was collected. Fun days and a 'Planning for Real' exercise (to come up with a 'People's Plan' for the site) were held over the summer.

Contact: Nottingham EF! (see contacts section p. 341)

Menwith Hill Women's Peace Camp

Menwith Hill in the Yorkshire Dales is the largest US spy base in the world. Using its 27 (soon to be 29) satellite dishes, covered by radomes (the famous 'golf balls') the US National Security Agency (NSA) can eavesdrop on all national and international calls, email, faxes and telexes in the Northern Hemisphere. These communications are then sifted for 'keywords'—sorting millions of words per minute, tracking governments, armies, businesses, groups and individuals. The US needs Menwith Hill to plan, prepare and carry out wars—it played a crucial role in the Gulf War in 1991.

Activists have been protesting against the base since the early '80s and there has been a permanent women's peace camp at the base since 1994. By continuously breaking into the base, the women from the camp have found out more top secret information about Menwith Hill than is known about any other NSA spy base. The camp was threatened with eviction in November 1998 and the women complied with a court order to move all but one caravan—the camp has now been scaled down, allowing the campers to refocus onother activities…

Sellafield Women's Peace Camp (bi-monthly)

Sellafield Women's Peace camp has been a site of protest against the nuclear/military industry since 1990. The camp takes place the last full weekend of every second month and is situated outside the visitors' centre at Sellafield nuclear plant, near Seascale on the west coast of Cumbria.

Contact: Box Z, c/o CRC, 16 Sholebroke Avenue, Leeds, LS7 3HB. Phone: 0113 262 1534.Email (marked clearly for the peace camp): cornerstone@gn.apc.org

Bingley

After living for two years in a beautiful riverside location, the campers of the Bingley 'Ryeloaf' camp abandoned their home in November '98. The site was resisting the construction of the £64m Bingley Relief Road Scheme, which is intended to service a proposed greenbelt housing development of 10,000 properties. The camp was originally set up when the scheme was first aired in 1996 and featured walkways, treehouses, lock-ons, a communal bender, a nearby squat and a ground hut on stilts. The site suffered from a lack of people and those few that were still living there just got burnt out. The decision to build the A650 has been constantly postponed since the Tory road-building programme collapsed. But after lengthy legal processes Bingley council finally got the go-ahead for the road in 1998. In November '98 the council did a recce, and finding the site deserted, they levelled the place, taking out 16 mature trees at the same time.

Manchester: Arthur's Wood and Cedar Wood

On the edge of a valley in a beautiful beech woodland lies the camp of Arthur's Wood. On Sunday 21st June 1998 protesters set up camp in the wood, near the site of the Manchester's second runway (see DoD no. 6, p. 82) when they heard that AMEC were planning to fell trees during the bird nesting season. Contractors arrived the next day to find people in trees blocking their path!

The trees in Arthur's Wood are not even on the route of the second runway. Manchester Airport says it needs to cut them down to improve flightpath visibility and radar reception when the runway is opened, but the Inspector of the public inquiry



advised that everything possible should be done to prevent these trees being felled. The wood belongs to the National Trust who are removing environmentalists (accused of "trampling on the ground") from their land in order to allow Manchester Airport to trash it. In the spring of '99 another camp was set up in Cedar Woods to prevent tree felling there. The camps' appeal against eviction was thrown out of the court in June—leaving both sites on eviction alert.

Contact: Cedar and Arthur's Woods, Meercat Protest Village, Nr. Oversley Lodge Farm, Atrincham Road, Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 4LJ. Phone: 01565 873 551 / 07931 931 850 / 07957 993 456 / 07979 361 416

Park Nook Camp, Liverpool

A 3-acre inner-city green space within the boundaries of Liverpool's Princes Park is under threat from developers wanting to build 2 blocks of luxury flats, a new road and a car park. The site is an oasis of wildness in the city and is home to owls, foxes, rabbits and pipistrelle bats. Four treehouses were constructed in May, and more walkways and lock-ons are being prepared.

Phone: 0403 176 279

Sheffield

The Tysak site in Sheffield was occupied for a weekend in August '98 to oppose a planned supermarket development on the largest empty space in South Sheffield. The site aimed to show alternative uses for the space, with cricket and football pitches and a cinema put up, and though it rained and rained all weekend, local kids came to play...

Manchester Birley Tree

In Hulme, an inner city area of Manchester being thouroughly 'regenerated' (i.e. knocked down so the corporate scum can move in) locals got active in June '98 when the oldest tree in the area was threatened by a proposed hotel—it was soon boasting a cosy treehouse, bender, displays and a community garden. The campaign went to court to be evicted, and negotiated an agreement not to fell the Black Poplar until a detailed planning application was put in for the hotel the council so desperately want for this inner-city area.

Contact: Manchester EF! (see contacts section, p. 341)

Green Guard

The Green Guard camp set up to oppose the constuction of 500 houses and a 4 mile dual carriageway at Nantwich near Crewe, was evicted in September '98. Under threat were (rare) Black Poplars, an orchard and hedgerows up to 30 foot thick. The camp boasted treehouses, a tunnel, a tower, and 97% local support. However, dwindling numbers meant the last few occupants chose to move off the site the day before the eviction was due to take place. The campaign continues—when the bulldozers came for the ancient hedgerows a few weeks later, they were occupied by local people, who proceeded to stop work for 4 days.

The Midlands



Birmingham Northern Relief Road

The campaign to stop Britain's first privately funded toll motorway continues, despite the camp being evicted in the middle of June. The road will be a 27 mile long, 6 lane motorway bypassing Birmingham to the north and will destroy woodlands, water meadows and important ecological sites and pave the way for greenbelt expansion along its route. A new camp is promised soon.

The major evictions on the route of the £700m BNRR took place over the traditional winter eviction season of '98-'99. Over December and January the site saw three evictions of camps and squats inside six weeks. The Moneymore squats were the first to go—several hundred police, baliffs and security guards turned up on 8th December. At the same time the cops destroyed a bunker on the Greenwood site. The tunellers included one security guard defector who stayed underground for three days. The eviction of the final camp came a few days later on 13th of January—with most people bailed off route and six people remanded after a bunker eviction a few days earlier, there were only three people around to keep the Greenwood camp running, so they were fairly quickly evicted.

After the evictions in December and January, a new camp was set up at The Spinney. This was evicted in the middle of June. However, resistance to the BNRR is still going strong... And with 26 1/2 miles of route left to protect there's plenty to do!

Contact: Birmingham Northern Relief Road Campaign, The Spinney, Turf Pits Lane, Nr. Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B75 5T? Phone: 07931 161 761



Ketts Rebellion

A former hospital site in Norfolk was squatted on the 10th July to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the Ketts Rebellion of 1549. That summer the dispossessed peasantry of Norfolk formed themselves into a 20,000 strong army which reclaimed the commons for two months and locked up the hated landowners.

The campers are trying to use the little-known 1965 Commons Registration Act to get the site classified as a village green thus saving it as a commons for the future.

Contact: The Land is Ours, Box E, 111 Magdalen Rd. Oxford OX4 1RQ. Tel: 01865 722016/ site mobile 0961 460171

Anti-Genetix Squat in Norfolk

At 5am on Saturday 23rd of May 1998, Britain's first 'crop squat' began, as 30 anti-GE activists moved on to a release site for experimental sugar beet at Kirby Bedon near Norwich. Within a few hours gardens were established, transforming this epitome of industrial corporate agriculture into an organic garden. The campers got an eviction order after two weeks (what do you expect if you squat the land of the Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk?), and packed up and left.

Contact: Norfolk EF! (see contacts p. 333).

Alvis Peace Camp

Camp set up against the Alvis factory in Coventry which makes Scorpion tanks and tank kits for Indonesia, where they will be used for internal security and political repression.

Butts Water Meadow

The camp set up in December '97 in Bury St. Edmonds to stop an access road for the local Greene King brewery was disbanded in March '98, tatting down the day before their eviction date to the surprise of the cops and baliffs who turned up the next day. Plans to take action were called off when a judge ruled that Greene King were wrong not to have conducted an environmental assessment for their planned road across the virtually untouched Butts Water Meadow. The campaign continues...



Wales and the South West



Brewery Fields/ Eithinog

Brewery Fields: a beautiful piece of common land in Bangor, unploughed for 40 years, with a marvellous view of the sea prized by local residents and potential developers alike. The camp to stop housing development on the fields was violently evicted on March 31st '98. All eight protesters needed hospital treatment. The officer in charge of the eviction claimed to be using 'approved techniques'.

A new camp was set up on an access road, on part of the site not covered by the original eviction order. Treehouses and walkways were set up. Threatened with eviction again in July '98, campers tried to thrash out a deal to avoid this last eviction. While negotiations were going on, the enemy used walkways to get up trees and cut rope bridges while unharnessed protesters were still on them; others were violently wrestled out of the trees. They tried to hack away at a tunnel with a shovel, only damaging the door, so blocking the occupant's only exit. Despite all this, campers held out for 22 hours.

Contact: Gwynedd and Mon EF! (see contacts p. 341)

Teddy Bear Woods

The camp set up mainly by locals in 1996 to stop the Weymouth Brown Route Road has avoided its expected eviction. Protesters discovered in July '98 that the Weymouth Relief Road will not go ahead—the government won't give the council the money for the road.

Ashton Court

The camp at Ashton Court was set up in March '98 to stop the extension of the limestone quarry owned by Australian multinational Pioneer Aggregates into 20 acres of wildflower meadows and public parkland. The meadow contains over 90 rare species which are being 'translocated' (Star Trek here we come!) by Alaska Environmental to allow Pioneer to dynamite the land where they used to be. The camp has disrupted the relocation on a number of occasions and near the end of '98, 10 lorries at Alaska's Avonmouth plant were sabbed.

After some months of noisy activity the camp was taken down in March '99. But the campers did not go



out without a bang—protestors visited Ian Wattle, Pioneer's planning manager and translocated his lawn on to the pavement outside his house. The daffodils from his garden were planted in his car. Later on in the week two people abselied 100 feet down on to a ledge in the quarry five minutes before the face was due to be blasted. They unfurled a banner reading "Oi!—No!" and were only removed 32 hours later when climbers were flown in specially from Dublin.

Contact: c/o Bristol FoE, 10-12 Picton St. Montpellier, Bristol, BS6 5QA. Phone: 07970 423 834

Avon Ring Road

Although the camp to stop 'Bristols answer to the M25' was recently evicted, the campaign continues. Work began on this £30m dual carriageway road through the ancient Siston Common in June '99. The road will destroy a disused railway line, large areas of fields and woodland and a beautiful section of cycle path along the route of the old railway. If it is built infill development and suburban sprawl will destroy even more.

When site clearance work started in November '98, direct action took off. Camps were swiftly set up and on 12th January '99 the campaign invaded the only building left on route, the day before it was due to be demolished, and christened it the 'Hotel Chechnya'. In the spring protesters built a camp and tree houses in a 100 year old oak tree to draw attention to the Ring Road-to-M4 Link Road. The government has since axed this Link Road.

Contact: STARR (Stop The Avon Ring Road) c/o 84 Colston St. Bristol BS1 5BB Phone: 0797 999 0389

Radstock

A camp was set up in summer '97 in an area in which Bath and North Somerset council are planning to build high cost fortified executive housing, shops and industrial units on top of a piece of naturally regenerated railway line—an open space that local people want kept that way. Served an eviction order as of Oct 7th '98 the camp was on constant eviction alert throughout the end of '98.

Contact: Bath EF! (see contacts p. 341)

Swindon Greenbelt Housing

The camp set up against the construction of greenbelt housing outside Swindon was evicted in January. The site was set up in opposition to a proposed £2.5 million scheme by Beaufort Homes. A public right of way was closed and an ancient hedgerow flattened, trees were felled and wildlife eradicated. Development then increased from 12 houses to a further 750. Swindon Town Council has been quoted as saying: "Swindon will become a city, no matter what the cost." After the eviction, 80 people took part in a protest walk around the site.

Contact: The Rational Trust c/o 49 Holbein Rd. Swindon, SN5 8AQ Phone: 0788 059 2370 / 0836 743 581

Victory Against Greenbelt Housing!

And in a related Wiltshire greenfield battle: Plans have been dropped to trash Hagbourne Copse—a neglected woodland by junction 16 of the M4. The woodland was up for sale and the agents dealing with it just love industrial development. However, after the Rational Trust threatened direct action, the sale was dropped.

Contact: The Rational Trust c/o 49 Holbein Rd. Swindon, SN5 8AQ Phone: 0788 059 2370 / 0836 743 581

Toytown

In August '98 a camp called 'Toytown' was set up to defend woodland and playing fields in the centre of Cheltenham from two new roads, 1,500 car parking spaces, a Waitrose supermarket, a drive through fast food restaurant, a 10 screen cinema shed, a petrol station, a nightclub, a bowling alley, a theme pub and a private health and fitness centre, all of which Cheltenham already has.

Local people were angry because their children will lose the only playing field in the area. It's also one of the last green spaces in the area, a riverside wildlife habitat, that is home to bats, two potential brownfield housing sites, and the historic Alstone Spa. After 2 years, the campaign to protect the area moved into direct action, setting up camp and also organising high-profile stunts to embarrass the council and the 'developers'. Campers built treehouses, a compost toilet, a covered kitchen, office and benders. They also helped with activities for the young people who use the woodland as a play area, and built a permaculture garden as well as taking action against the builders Waitrose and Morrison Construction.

The camp closed down but action continued: in early spring a plucky band of five 'Toypeople' effortlessly stopped bulldozers and shredders who had come to level the 'Toytown' site by climbing on top of them and telling the drivers to "go away and take your machinery with you". And to everyone's surprise they did!

Contact: Cheltenham EF! 16 Portland Street, Cheltenham, Gloucs. GL52 2PB Email: chelt_ef@yahoo.com



The South East



Lyminge Forest

After a couple of years battling against the Rank organisation, who want to build a massive 'holiday village' on top of 500 acres of green-belt land in Kent (see DoD no. 6, p. 72), the Lyminge campers have almost won their battle against the entertainment giants. Rank seem to have lost interest, but there's a rumour that planning permission may be sold to Center Parcs.

Contact: Friends of Lyminge Forest, c/o 3 Abbott Road, Folkstone, Kent CT20 1NG. Phone: 01303 257 046 / 01303 265 737 / 0468 945 595 / 01436 820901 Email: merlin@envirolink.org

Camp for Justice

After Britain's first animal liberation action camp—'Camp Rena' (see DoD no. 7, p. 56), camps outside the notorious vivisectors Huntingdon Life Sciences have continued. HLS get paid by medical and cosmetic companies to cut up cats , dogs, rodents and monkeys for them. The 'Camp for Justice' is the fourth outside HLS, and was set up on the anniversay of the showing of Channel 4's 'It's a Dog's Life' which blew the scandal of HLS wide open. The programme caused the company's share price to drop dramatically and campaigners are hoping the camp will have a similar effect.

Contact: HDSC (Huntingdon Death Sciences Campaign), PO Box 325, Cambridge, CB1 2UF. Phone: 0589 026 435

Oxford Railway Squat

The old LMS railway station in Oxford was squatted on 2nd May '98 to prevent a six lane road and a university business school (to be paid for by an arms dealer!) being built in the city centre. The £1m road will destroy trees and slice through one end of the Grade II listed old railway station. The building was decorated and used by the communtiy for free events. Treehouses were built (including one thatched!) in the 8 mature trees.

Wednesday 9th September '98 saw the start of the eviction of the old railway station by Oxford University. The baliffs took 60 hours to evict the building and it is believed to have cost more than half a million pounds. It was an inventive, creative, full-on fun-packed anarchic pisstake of an eviction thanks to snug treehouses, cargo-nets, barricades, lockons, bunkers, and the world's first Sofa-Lock-On! The last tunneller was removed at dusk on Friday 11th, ending an eviction which saw 17 arrests, the confiscation and destruction of personal property by police, damage to the (listed) building by police, 3 extra trees illegally felled, one cop injured when he fell through a roof (pigs might fly!) and one protestor get 2 broken fingers. Legal proceedings have begun regarding the illegal fellings, the damage and the injured protester.

Kingston Trees

The poplar trees that had been occupied since November '97 at Kingston in London were evicted in March '98 with helicopters and riot police at 5:30 in the morning. The forces of Babylon had a 53ft tower, a tree village and tunnels to contend with. The local Council and developers Fairclough Homes wanted to cut down the 76 trees to 'enhance the view' of the Thames for dwellers in a posh new estate (£100,000 for a riverside view anyone?) Over a hundred police, 140 security and 35 sherrifs officers arrived on the first day of the eviction. Two people were still down the tunnels two days later. The police offered them a deal—if they came out then 30 people would be allowed on the site for a media stunt. One protester reported the response was "100% fuck off."

Aldermaston Women's Peace Camp

The peace camp is held on alternate weekends outside the Aldermaston Atomic Weapons Establishment near Reading. In March Trident Ploughshares 2000 activists invaded the base, where they manufacture nuclear weapons. They scaled the fences and blockaded the gates. Campers also organise shareholder campaigns, awareness raising and direct action protests.

Contact: 33 Heron Road, Bristol, BS5 0LT Phone: 0117 939 3746/ 01703 554 434

Crystal Palace

The Crystal Palace site was evicted in March '99 at a cost of over £1m, after a year of resisting the construction of a huge cinema multiplex on park land in South London. The eviction only finally ended after the final two protestors voluntarily came out of the underground bunker they had been in for the past two and a half weeks (see article on page 189). The campaign is far from over.

Phone: 0181 693 8200

Epsom

In June 1998 activists set up camp in Epsom in London to stop a relief road and car park being built on top of local woodland. They occupied some prime



(stockbroker belt) development land, woods, and squatted a house. The camp seems to have been in a top location—the council offices, police station, ambulance service, fire brigade, courts and baliffs were all just minutes away! One local councillor took to threatening campers with violence, saying: "We can't afford to evict you. Fuck off while you've still got time." However the council did finally manage to stump up the cash and in January '99 the camp was evicted (see article on page 193). Up to 500 cops, baliffs, the FIT team, scab climbers and tunnellers and the Under Sherrif of Greater London all stormed on to site in a dawn raid operation believed to have cost £100,000. However, the camp had been abandoned and partly burned out a month before and when the forces of darkness arrived there was only one man in a van occupying the site. A local councillor justified the operation by saying that they "didn't know how many people were going to be on that site"—despite it being right next to the police station!

ICC Genetix Squat

After loads of hassle from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Inter-Continental Caravan (ICC) finally got their visas to enter the UK in June. There were 600 activists in the caravan, from many countries in the Third World, including loads from India. They came to the UK to bring the concerns of the South directly to the heart of the North. Their visit to Europe was to coincide with the G8 summit on June 18th. Inspired by the genetics crop squat that took place last year in Norfolk, British activists planned a crop squat to welcome the caravan to the UK. However on 27th June they were busted while attempting to squat a field where the mutant crop had already been trashed. They had to very quickly move on to a new site in Essex. The site was swiftly turned into a permaculture garden with an info centre focusing on the dangers of genetic engineering. (see articles on page 28 and 97).

St Mary's Churchyard

In July '98 Camp AARDVARK (Arboreal Activists Reinforce Decent Values Against Redevelopment Killing) was set up to protect St Mary's Churchyard—"the very last green open space in Southampton"—from being redeveloped by the Church of England and the usual property speculators. Their plans were revealed to involve covering most of this beautiful churchyard in buildings and tarmac. Campers quickly established a base camp and houses in some of the 40 mature trees. Aardvarkers were all from Southampton—one was christened in the church—and there was loads of local support. The camp was attacked one night by organised thugs not from the local area, who trashed tents, badly bruised someone's back and broke someone else's finger. The camp was disbanded in August as the Church scaled down their plans and were sent back to the drawing board. The camp will set up again if needed.

Hockley Housing Camp

A new protest camp was set up in July to resist a housing development of 66 luxury homes on 11 acres of ex-greenbelt land at Hockley near Southend. Seeing as the adults in the area weren't doing anything, the camp has been put together by a group of teenagers aged between 14 and 16. The site is next to a designated wildlife area featuring great crested newts, badgers, adders, shrews and more...

Contact: 01702 206 181

Diggers Land Occupation

On the 3rd April, St. George's Hill was briefly home to a camp in memory of the 350th anniversary of the original Diggers' land occupation, when, at the end of the English Civil War, Gerrard Winstanley and his chums set up camp on common land the landlords were trying to enclose. St. George's Hill now boasts a golf course and one of the country's most exclusive housing estates, home to Cliff Richard among others. Three hundred people marched to the hill and then went on to a nearby site to establish a communal settlement—aiming to increase public access rights to the hill.

Contact: The Land is Ours, Box E, 111 Magdalen Rd. Oxford OX4 1RQ. Tel: 01865 722016

Gorse Wood

A new anti-road camp was set up in Essex in May '99 to stop the A170 bypass from Chelmsford to Southend. The road is going to be paid for through the infamous Private Finance Inititive—the same scheme that brought us the A30 extension. The bypass, which is to be built by Laing construction, also seems to be part of a grand plan for a future London outer orbital motorway. It will pass through several fragments of bluebell woods and aquatic habitats and threaten others by its proximity. Fifty people set up the camp and had erected two treehouses in the first week. Work on the road is expected to begin in August.

Contact: Friends of Lyminge Forest, c/o 3 Abbott Road, Folkstone, Kent CT20 1NG. Phone: 07957 915977 Email: merlin@envirolink.org

Comments on Camps
Out of Site, Out of Mind?

The physical occupation of sites threatened by development has been one of the main strategies used by our movement over the last eight years. The last few years has seen an increasing amount of concern with, and discussion about, their effectivness as a direct action tactics. Here are four pieces of writing that raise some of the main points from these discussions.

Camps Are Not Enough!

This piece is critical of direct action camps, since I reckon the negative aspects of protest camps are more important and worthy of analysis than the positive ones. Yes, camps can be great; dynamic, exciting anarchic communities, examples of low-impact earth-centred living, where people live and struggle together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and solidarity. However, I've felt for some time that such ecotopian glimpses are all too often swamped by the other side of the story. I'm certainly not criticising those who are, or have been, on camps, as that's most of us—and it's undeniable that camp-based campaigns have inspired our movement to amazing feats. However, we must consider the tactical effectiveness of camps, and the effects of 'camp culture' on Earth First!



The development of Earth First! in Britain has been heavily influenced by protest camps. Many campaigns, especially against roads, have relied on the central tactic of building a camp, fortifying it fantastically, and waiting to resist eviction. All camps share an identical mindset: defensiveness. Extremely impressive resistance has been achieved with this tactic, but it's a limited strategy. In particular, because camps demand loyalty from those who defend them, spending time or resources on more offensive tactics (office occupations, site invasions, sabotage) can be seen as abandoning the camp, almost to the point of 'treason'!

'Defensiveness' leads to campaigns stereotyping themselves, and makes innovation so much harder—unless it involves taller, madder treehouses or deeper, more impregnable tunnels. Logically, the only way to advance in the 'arms race' between us and the bailiffs/scab climbers/men-in-black is to make ourselves so vulnerable that serious injury or death becomes even more likely. Enough of us have either been hospitalised (or come close) to make us question whether the stakes are too high to be worth it. I don't want any of my friends to become martyrs.

The danger of camp life highlights another problem—camps are highly specialised environments. Not everyone has the agility, stamina, confidence and time to climb trees, hang off bits of blue rope, or live outdoors in all weathers. Therefore, camps divide activists into two; the ultra-committed—usually young—whose lifestyle becomes intertwined with the camp, and the rest who can only support them. This hierarchical dynamic is not a good basis on which to build a radical movement. The image which often underlies it—the individualistic, self-sacrificing defender of the trees—is also a problem. I believe that it is our collective confidence we should be developing, and individual commitment and ability should feed that confidence, not override it.

Camps very often have an aggressively countercultural vibe, which most people will find alienating. Camps can be too easily dominated by macho ego-warriors, complete with harness codpieces, who create an intimidating atmosphere, especially after a few cans. Of course, I'm not suggesting serving McDonalds and installing Sky TV at sites to attract 'normal people' (the counterculture is a good thing!), but we need to question what opportunities camps present for facilitating wider involvement in our struggles.

You don't need to actually visit a camp to feel alienated; the spectacularisation of our movement has ensured that most TV viewers can now safely view eco-direct action as an alien 'phenomenon', rather than a challenge. Our over-reliance on spectacular tactics—perfectly illustrated by the modern protest camp—is a serious limitation to our threat.



Camp-based activism creates a transient, rootless movement, comprised of people who have lived in too many places which end up being trashed. The mobility of the movement has many strengths, and has fed our dynamism and energy. However, it marginalises us as a 'cause' beyond the real lives of most communities, and is not sustainable. There are only so many years of the camp-building/eviction cycle anyone can take, and most activists become too burnt-out, disillusioned or wage-enslaved to 'carry on camping'. It's thus difficult enough to keep existing numbers and energy up, let alone expand! The need to develop new more sustainable and inclusive modes of struggle, without losing any radical edge, is urgent.

I'll stress again that I'm not anti-camp. I hope that camps will continue to pop up like mad mushrooms to vex our enemies and change lives—and hopefully continue to actually stop things, as at Stringer's Common in 1997 (see *Do or Die* No. 7, page 2). However, the attitudes and assumptions preserved by camps must be challenged. Camps are a huge element of our tradition, but we need to learn from other traditions, and—most importantly of all—develop novel strategies that will really kick some arse. I don't think we'll do that until we analyse honestly the shortcomings of our previous struggles. Camps are not enough!

Back To Basics

For many activists, protest sites are a 'thing of the past'. Their tactical limitations and unsustainability, amongst other things, have been under a lot of discussion. However, a huge number of present activists have been involved with protest sites and, regardless of all these arguments, their influence is undeniable. Even if many activists, like myself, have 'moved on', I think we still need to address how sites have influenced the way we work, and consequently how we can go forward without them.

Sites, in a number of ways, helped build and sustain the network that we have now. They have an accessible nature; an open invitation to have a cup of tea or a long-term stay. Of course, this has to be weighed up against many negative aspects; from drunk or offensive behaviour to generally muddy or messy conditions. However, in the past sites have attracted huge numbers and a fairly broad range of people. This, admittedly, was largely due to the mass appeal of the anti-roads movement and hard to relate to the broader global anti-capitalist direction we have moved in, but the point I'm trying to make is that sites provided an open ground for a large number of people to come and fight together.

This is where I think the real significance of being on site comes in. To live with such a range of people, to share the same experiences; everything from trying to light a fire when it's been raining for days to the intense emotionally and physically painful evictions, is a bonding process that I don't feel we have managed to replace yet. On site, I learned to tolerate and trust people I wouldn't otherwise have probably talked to. Yes, it's an overly intense atmosphere, and



yes, it's a fast track to burnout, but it also produces friendships that would normally take years to consolidate.

It isn't just a comment on site social life. That kind of friendship is crucial to making cohesive groups and successful actions. None of us are perfectly reliable. It's not enough to know someone has good pol-



itics. You've got to know if they'll do what they said they'd do, whether they're likely to be late or just not turn up or if they'll back you up if an action goes wrong. We need to work with people we can trust. But if people only rely on the friends they've known for years, or were on site with, it makes us insular and cliquey; feeding attitudes like 'if you weren't at Twyford or Newbury you don't count'. If we are to successfully grow, new people need to be included and trusted. Admittedly you don't have to live on site to form those kinds of friendships. Actions, even the bad ones, can be good shared experiences. Skill sharing can be done by pairing up with new people. Good debriefings, social events and affinity groups training, especially trust games, are all ways to get to know individuals better. But these things need more emphasis. We've taken for granted the opportunity sites provided for meeting so many new people, for sharing so many intense experiences, crammed into a short space of time, and emerging with a really strong group of friends.

I'm not trying to be nostalgic about sites. I'm not saying they're perfect or irreplaceable. I think we've come a long way from the days of anti-road sites like Newbury. We've successfully broken out of 'single-issues', incorporated an anti-capitalist analysis, and made strong links with groups all over the world. But our efforts to strengthen our own network in Britain has, I think, shown just how much we depend on individual friendships to work well as a group and to make strong links with other groups. We can't afford to take for granted the trust and friendship that is fundamental to sustaining this network.

It's Shite On Site!

Like many people my first real involvement in ecological direct action came about on protest camps. I have visited and lived on sites at the Wells Relief Road, the Newbury Bypass, Manchester Airport and Bingley. There has been a lot of discussion over the last few years over what role sites can play and even over whether they have any valid role to play at all. I am of the opinion that sites have the potential to be an effective and progressive form of activism. I am also of the opinion that they generally refuse to address the problems that prevent them from reaching this potential. The result of this refusal goes a long way to account for the fact that I have had very little to do with them for the last two years.

Living on site is a very intense experience, your entire life and identity become bound up with a particular piece of land and what you can do to defend it. There are good things that can come out of this; passion and commitment to your activism, as well as the radicalisation that occurs when something directly relevant to your life is destroyed by business and the state, protected as ever by the police. However, this intensity of immediate experience, combined with the fact that sites are almost always very marginalised from the rest of the society which they inhabit, also leads to many problems:

Sites tend to be very 'single issue' orientated. Those who live on them often develop a kind of arrogance, whereby they see sites, and their site in particular, as being the only worthwhile form of protest. There tends to be very little strategic analysis on site with people content to remain on the defensive, even looking forward to the glorious defeat of eviction as though it was impossible for them to take the offensive in any way.

The level of wider political thought is often even worse; I remember several people on site telling me that they weren't interested in capitalism, class, or animal rights and this being accepted as though there was nothing wrong with it. Someone even voiced the opinion that road building was not a problem, just so long as no trees got cut down!

Sites are often also home to various hierarchies based on gender, expertise and sub-cultural credibility. If you dont know how to climb trees, have a job, look fairly straight or are female, then the chances are that you will be made to feel as though you cant do much to help, and, what you can do will involve you playing only a supportive role for those who are doing the real work.

Connected to the lack of political analysis, and feeding the macho cult of the long-haired eco-warrior, is the obsession that many sites have with the media. The media is treated almost entirely uncritically, with journalists invited on to site and people performing all sorts of ludicrous antics for them, hanging out of trees and even appearing on chat shows to be ridiculed. In this way sites play a key role in their own spectacularisation, turning themselves and the rest of the ecological resistance movement into a sub-cultural commodity, all to get their faces on telly in the interests of a single issue.

Like most forms of activism, protest sites have their good points and bad points. The criticisms I have made of sites can often also be applied to non-site based direct action. The difference is that, in my experience, the issues are more pronounced, and, crucially, less challenged, on-site than off-site.



Site Life

I have lived on protest sites on and off since the summer of 1996. The few years before that, which many people regard as the hey-day of British protest sites, were well before my time and so I have no experience of them. I first got involved in site life simply because it was the most effective and accessible form of direct action that was around at the time. The sites that I have lived on have all aimed to prevent the building of environmentally destructive developments by almost exclusively defensive tactics. Occupying the land under threat and building as many fortifications as possible with the aim of making the eviction as difficult and expensive as possible for the forces of darkness.

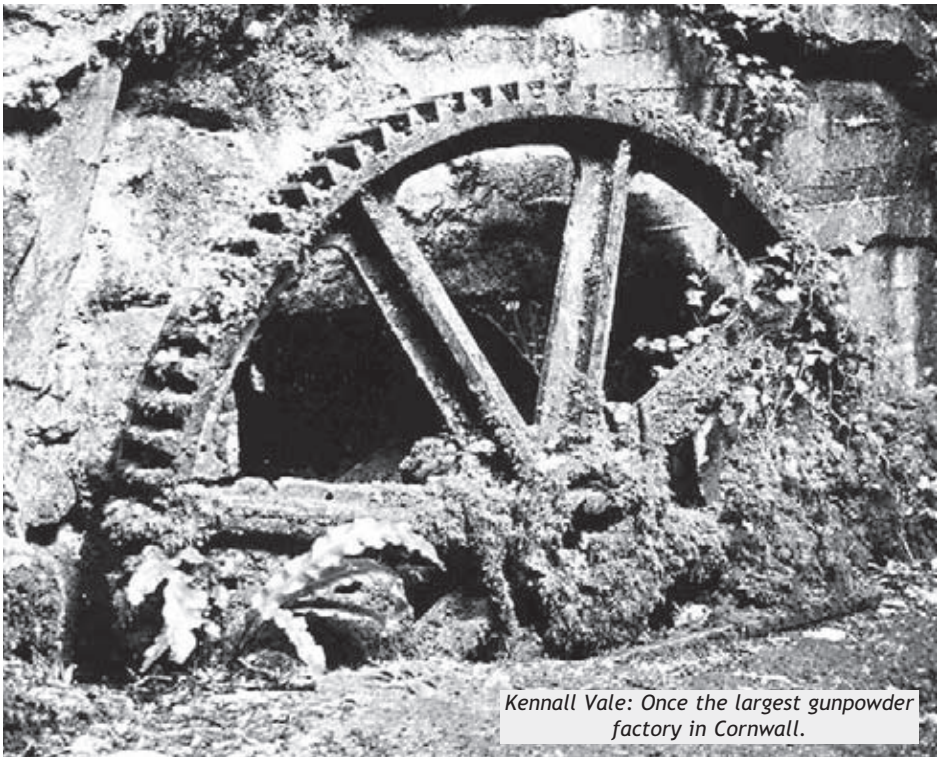
This has proved quite effective, especially since the development of underground defences (tunnels and bunkers) which can cost hundreds of pounds an hour to evict and can last out for weeks. In theory the structures themselves could last months but this has never been tested as people tend to crack and come out voluntarily well before they would have been evicted. This has led the tunnel bailiffs to just wait around for protesters to get bored, mad or run out of food, only putting on the pretence of work when the Undersheriff comes round—thus further lengthening evictions. (This state of affairs will probably continue until the police train up specialist tunnel cops!) The threat of an expensive tunnel eviction was enough to make Guildford Council change their mind about a road widening scheme and who knows how many others have decided against some new earth raping activity behind closed doors.

One of the big things about protest sites is that since you are occupying the area that you want to save it takes over everything. This tends to make the experience fucking exhausting and intense. The last site I lived on I felt like I was on the job every minute of every day. Just when you were about to relax there were pigs at the gate or local nutters in the kitchen and you would have to get up and sort it out. Despite that the all-encompassingness of protest sites this is still their biggest turn-on for me. On site you know that everything you do; whether it's cooking, cleaning, washing up, chopping wood, watching the kids, building defences or going on actions, contributes towards the overthrow of the State. Work becomes something you want to do and get a buzz out of. Living like that is just fantastic. There's something about living communally combined with the edge of confrontation and struggle that makes a protest site a proper autonomous zone and liberated area. Since living on site takes so much energy, with the defenses and preparations for eviction tending to become the entire focus of the campaign, nobody has the energy or time to offensively hit the companies involved. On the other hand having a semi-permanent centre of activity that people can come to any time to help can keep a momentum going. It also allows people new to the movement to become more involved quicker. It can take months to gain acceptance in an Earth First! group but, provided you muck in, only a matter of days at a protest site.

You have to put a lot of energy into a protest site before you can get any out, and there is always the danger that keeping the site running will become an uphill struggle that leaves no time to attack the enemy or fortify the space. Crystal Palace (see pages 154 and 189) was an object lesson in this for many of us. Special Brew was our undoing. Most sites these days have to deal with the demon drink as so many activists are heavy drinkers it has become central to the culture of protest sites. It's the only thing I really don't like about site life. It makes us more vulnerable to threats from outside—pigs, vigilantes, local nutters etc.. It makes us fight amongst ourselves and it causes people who used to have a problem with drinking to either leave or get sucked back in. As Crystal Palace was an urban site this was magnified by local pissheads that came to visit. Sadly kicking people off site became an almost daily occurrence. We didn't like doing it but we had no choice. That part was easy but what if lots of otherwise hardcore activists are big drinkers? What if it's most of the site?

At Palace we used to just let it slide until the communal areas were filthy, the firewood was damp or non-existent, the tools were lunched out and no one could take it anymore. Then a couple of people would have a good shout at anyone they thought was lunching out, we'd kick out the real pisstakers and everyone else would get off their arses and clean up, chop wood and build a big impressive defence. Then we would repeat the entire process again. This pattern was familiar to me from campaigns past, although it has to be said never in quite such an extreme form. We always did get it together but a lot of the time many of us didn't think we would. Although we put up a damn good fight in the eviction I can't help thinking that we could have done so much more for so much less effort if we'd just not lunched out in the first place. Sobriety would have helped—it really would.

Take a Sad Song and Make it Better?
Ecological Restoration in the UK



Kennall Vale: Once the largest gunpowder factory in Cornwall.

"I see what is possible when we stand our ground, our common ground. I see forests and grasslands filled with masses of flowers and the native birds and wildlife that had long ago disappeared from this part of the planet. I see what can be done from the barest beginnings and under the most impossible conditions, with hardly any means or resources. Not by calculating, or waiting for the opportune moment, or the big money, or for a conference to confirm what must be done. I see what can be done by the power of simply doing it. And as I turn toward the starkly contrasting landscape behind me, I see all that is yet to be done."[1]

Ecological restoration is one of the most compelling tasks that we face, if we are to patch up the battered cradle of life that sustains us, as well as renewing our own bruised mental ecologies. Successfully removing the sources of the ongoing destruction will simply bring us round to our first full realisation of the scale of capitalism's ecologically fractured legacy. The challenge will be to steer ourselves to a gentle landing: not only the unglamorous work of clean-up, but the pre-eminent adventure of remaking an idyll from the wreckage. This unfolding process holds out the promise of a new accord: alienation banished, reconciled with ourselves and the world around us.

One obvious question is: why restore at all? Nature is resilient, with an immense capacity for recovery, so long as natural processes are given sufficient space and time to operate freely. (Even in a hostile environment, life still crowds irrepressibly up through the cracks.) History is littered with stories of the detritus of past empires redeemed by the encroaching vegetation. Bill McKibben describes "an explosion of green" in the north-eastern US after farming was largely abandoned in the 19th century—in New York State alone "forest cover… continued to grow by more than a million acres a decade through 1980".[2] Closer to home, "thousands of acres of woodland sprang up on derelict land in south-east Essex in the 1930s and 1940s".[3]

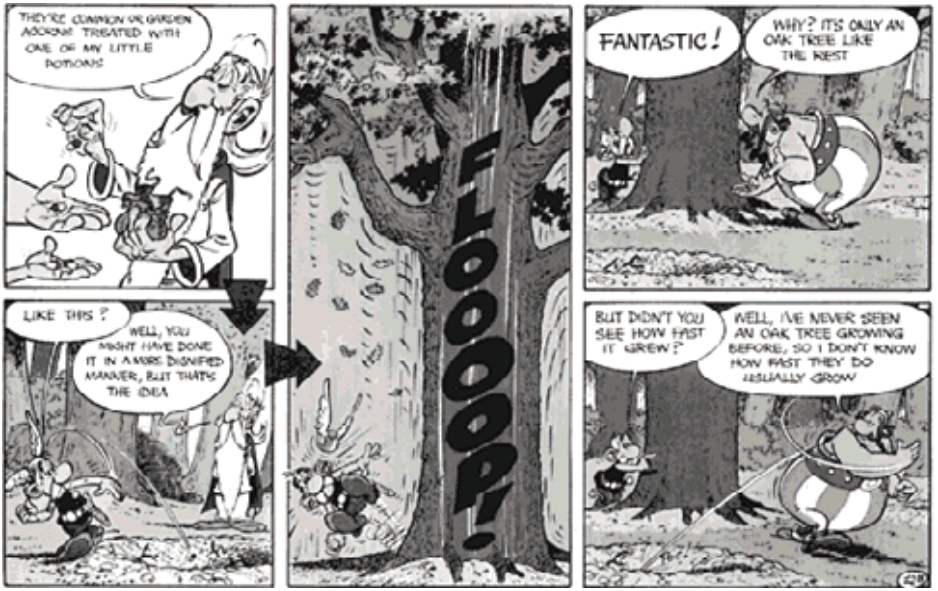
Enabling natural colonisation and regeneration, rather than the artifice of planting, is widely



favoured. This will "allow the most appropriate species for each location and site to establish and in the long term will be most likely to develop into healthy, biologically diverse woodland ecosystems". [4] Conversely, the (understandable) "human desire to see instant results or at least appreciable results within our lifetime"[5] risks contriving inferior, 'quick-fix' ersatz ecosystems—or 'quite areas'.[6]

The desire to leave nature to its own regenerative devices is not just sound ecological sense, but a reasonable reaction to the depths of conservation's mania for management. After the Great Storm of 1987, one organisation blithely proclaimed that "Trees are at great danger from nature", and another that "unless… positive encouragement [is] given to owners to restore these woods… they will revert to scrub and never recover".[7] Preposterous statements like "it is important that woodland is effectively managed to ensure its survival"[8] seem to spring more from an insecure need to feel wanted and indispensable—and thus engaging in frenetic busywork to obtain some kind of 'therapy through landscape'. Conservationists often appear to suffer from a paternalist philosophy of 'spare the saw and spoil the tree'.

Others have a valid objection to any energies devoted to restoration, given the continuing onslaught against the vestiges of the natural that still remain—comparing it to "repaint[ing] the kitchen cabinets when the house is on fire".[9] Amongst practitioners however, there is a widespread assumption that restoration is never a substitute for preservation—rather that the two should complement one another, particularly in a country as devoid of healthy ecosystems as ours.[10] Developers, on the other hand, routinely abuse the concept of restoration—and the related 'translocation'[11]—of habitats, as a pretext smoothing the way for further destruction. Talk of 'planning gain', 'end use', 'mitigation' and 'exchange land' is predicated on the spurious assumption that we can 'build a better habitat', as good as new—as if they were just so many interchangeable parts on a Fordist assembly line. This kind of 'habitat engineering' is reminiscent of the environment industry's 'end of pipe' approach to pollution, as applied to physical landscapes rather than toxic chemicals: rejecting any inconvenient changes to their processes, instead concentrating on lucrative 'cures' to treat the problems that invariably arise. (Don't forget that the Department of Transport (now DETR) is, laughably, the nation's biggest tree-planter.) Possibly one of the most repellent examples of this is English Nature (the government's abysmal wildlife watchdog) allowing peat stripping scum Levington to take what it can from the fantastic Thorne and Hatfield Moors SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), only to 'restore' them in about 25 years' time.[12]


THEY'RE COMMON VARIGATED ACORNS! TREATED WITH ONE OF MY LITTLE POTIONS!
LIKE THIS?
WELL, YOU MIGHT HAVE DONE IT IN A MORE DIGNIFIED MANNER, BUT THAT'S THE IDEA
FLOOOP!
FANTASTIC!
WHY? IT'S ONLY AN OAK TREE LIKE THE REST
BUT DIDN'T YOU SEE HOW FAST IT GREW?
WELL, I'VE NEVER SEEN AN OAK TREE GROWING BEFORE, SO I DON'T KNOW HOW FAST THEY DO USUALLY GROW



However, the fact that nature can and does bounce back unaided should not be cause for complacency. Recovery—particularly back to its original condition—is not inevitable; nature can roll with most but not all of the punches we throw: " 'Forests precede civilisation', it is said, 'deserts follow'…The [Roman] Empire's North African breadbasket, where 600 cities once flourished, is now a desert, as are the forests that were the breeding grounds of Hannibal's elephants."[13] There is a place for human agency in the work of restoration.

Why Restore?

"Whether or not a devastated area recovers depends on a number of conditions. Most fundamentally, the site needs its original topsoil… if the top horizon [of the soil] is altered—by adding chemicals, ploughing or planting crops—a different kind of vegetation emerges when the site is abandoned… But if neither fertilisers nor crops are introduced, even heavily used areas can return to the condition of nearby undisturbed areas."[14] Unfortunately for us, since at least 1945, virtually all of lowland Britain (and much of the uplands) has been subjected to substantial soil 'modification'. It may seem odd to define this as a problem, but huge tracts of our countryside are suffering from 'eutrophication', or excessive fertility—either as a result of direct application of chemicals, or indirectly felt on adjoining land through 'drift' of the chemicals. "The intensity of the seed rain (from a once rich countryside) is much diminished, and though the seed bank in the soil may be long-lived for some species, decades of herbicide and inorganic fertiliser use have transformed soils to make a return to the previous norm difficult without a helping hand".[15]

While natural regeneration may, in time, make good some of the losses, without any remedial intervention—including drastic measures such as actually stripping the topsoil[16]—we might find ourselves locked into an intractable spiral of decline. An example of this 'defertilising' work—perhaps better described as rehabilitation than restoration—is the 'biomanipulation' practised on the Norfolk Broads to reduce accumulated phosphate pollution and the accompanying algal blooms.[17] Such intervention has been described as a "kickstart" approach[18]—striving not to prejudice its future direction, but setting nature back down on the launch pad, to go its own way.

Looked at more broadly, our restoration efforts may at least help by "undoing the constraints our industrialism have placed upon [nature]".[19] For instance, while "artificially straightened rivers tend to 'recover' naturally"[20], this can't always be relied upon; extensive work was carried out on the Afon Ogwen (which "resembled a land drainage channel, not the Welsh river it once was") in Snowdonia in 1998, because "the natural… regime of the river had not shown any indication of being able to repair itself from the degradations".[21] (See the profile of the River Restoration Centre in the *Restoration Roundup* section, p. 180) Rivers and their floodplains have fared as badly as the soil; there is a powerful case for reversing our ubiquitous drainage works, and reinstating coherent hydrological regimes, in "what must have been a gloriously wet natural landscape"[22]—as long as we can keep the ague (malaria) at bay this time! (See RSPB Reedbed Creation profile in *Restoration Roundup*, p. 181.)

The scanty (semi) natural areas that we do still enjoy are in anything but robust shape—ill-equipped to absorb the threats that future change and upheaval might bring. Much of conservation is dedicated to shoring up these wobbly, fragmented habitat islands—atomised, overcrowded life rafts, whose species are being inexorably worn down by 'biogeographical' attrition.[23] As the National Trust's Rob Jarman explains, "each unit of habitat lost [outside] makes the [ecological] communities on the Trust's properties that much more vulnerable to external change".[24] 'An injury to all is an injury to one'—for example, other 'reservoir' populations are less available to bail out local extinctions.[25] Probably the most critical challenge confronting the fragments in their already weakened and susceptible state is that of climate change[26]—or more correctly, the accelerated volatility of the 'broken thermostat' effect.[27] As climate change brings the crisis of fragmentation to a head, now more than ever the agenda not only should be, but must be one of "restoration, enhancement and expansion… rather than just trying to harm [the environment] less"[28]—'joining up the dots' to allow for migration in the face of rapidly changing conditions. It is not just the physical movement of individuals and species that is at stake here, but opportunities for the exchange of unique, locally adapted genetic material, which have been so long constrained; basic genetic diversity is the ultimate insurance policy against unpredictable change.[29]

In a country—like Britain—plagued with an advanced state of ecological decomposition, what might be termed 'emergency ward' or 'basket case' conservation also becomes very important—this is, perhaps literally, 'clutching at straws'. It can cover



particular regions—eg. the Caledonian pine forest of the Highlands (Glen Affric and Abernethy profiles in *Restoration Roundup,* p. 174 and 179), or the native woodlands of Orkney and Shetland (Orkney profile in *Roundup,* p. 184)—where the habitat is at such a perilously low ebb that it is losing its grip on the cliff edge, and may not currently be able to 'help itself'. It can also encompass country-wide habitat types (and indeed species) whose near or total absence leaves a jarring gap in the continuum of the landscape. To pull a few names out of the hat, the following might fall into this category: the natural transitions of woodland up to and beyond the treeline (Carrifran Wildwood profile, p. 175), flooded or 'carr' forest (Gwen Finch Wetland Reserve profile, p. 176), lowland valley mires,[30] and so on.

One must not overlook the inward and social dimensions of ecological restoration—they may even be its most crucial attributes. It is at the least a statement of intent. Without getting too carried away with a sense of our collective power, restoration is ripe with the liberating, even alchemical, promise of transformation—finding its material expression in our immediate surroundings. It offers an exhilarating taste of that most dangerous commodity: hope, and a way out; there's everything to play for, all bets are off. As ever, when people are truly able to make their world—even the tiniest little scrap—the grinding malaise of destruction and loss begins to dissipate, prospects for creation and renewal rebound, and imprisoning notions of 'human nature' go out the window. By getting to grips—down and dirty—with their common patch, so rarely permitted except under the auspices of government and industry, the barren and hostile can become convivial space. We can begin to explore the links between conservation and conversation, between re-creation and recreation. As the Mattole Restoration Council came to realise in Northern California, "through engaging with the fundamental processes of a particular place, we might discover the appropriate models for our own activities and organisation".[31] The restorer restored; the doing (praxis) is as important as the done (it's never 'done'). Tara Garnett writes of the 'emboldening' effect of, in this case, urban farming: it can "stimulate a sense of common ownership and, in doing so, spur a sense of community into existence. This community may then move on to further collective action"[32]… During the riots in Benwell, Newcastle in the early 1990s, the "sense of ownership of the Park [which they had created] by the local community became very apparent… Many houses and the local pub were burnt, but the Nature Park—right in the centre—was untouched".[33]

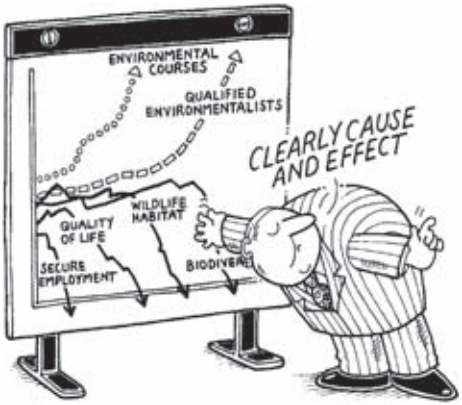
There is also an argument for efforts to maintain the rich, characteristic cultural—or 'vernacular'—landscapes, whose "patterns in particular places were created locally by the daily work of ordinary people".[34] While requiring potentially problematic 'management', they developed, at least in part, to satisfy local subsistence needs from local means, in the absence of today's national and global economy. In view of the pressing need to wean ourselves off petrochemical dependence, and to avoid stomping our ecological footprints across the globe[35], habitats like orchards, reedbeds, perhaps coppice, etc., could have a lot to teach us. In conjunction with more recent techniques such as permaculture, they could rejuvenate our sorely depleted skills base, and thus our own resilience and autonomy.[36]

Conservation and the Control Complex

Conservation has been described as "a unique enterprise in which industry expands as the resource diminishes, and there is no product".[37] In this respect it is a quintessentially 'post-modern' industry, and conservationists are masters of 'meta-work' (work about work)—ceaselessly networking and strategising within the 'charmed circle' of accredited bodies—and while "ever more effort has gone into conservation of nature… ever greater loss and destruction have occurred".[38] When considered in historical context, the actual effect of most restoration efforts is only to replace the lost with the new—imparting no 'net gain'. At best, depending on the vagaries of the economy, it is a holding operation—managing the crisis, knife-edge stabilising of the rate of decline. By virtue of being 'non-political' realists, conservationists are of course anything but. Refusing to wrestle with the explosive questions of power relations, land ownership and distribution, they are forced to rely upon the fruitless "voluntary principle", and its 'unholy trinity' of incentives, policy and guidance—the beseeching, red-carpet treatment for any landowner gracious enough to change their ways.

W.M. Adams argues that it is "an anathema to many conservationists to consider letting nature go", and that "caution about the abandonment of land is partly about the loss of control. Much of our conservation is based very precisely on the idea of control".[39] He likens it to "gardening on a vast scale"[40]—'lawn order'. At times, conservationists seem far more forgiving of economic growth than scrub





growth—laissez faire for capitalism, zero tolerance for wild nature. (Maybe it is the only thing over which they can exercise control in this society.) Wildness must be quarantined[41] or taken into protective custody—kept in its place and made, literally, 'manage-able'. The ferocity with which they fall upon scrub raises suspicions that it is a displacement activity—anything to divert attention from the uncomfortable realisation that 'You can't restore your way out of a social relationship.' Habitat loss has come primarily through social factors, and can only truly be made good by social transformation—not by swimming against the tide with more acute and technically proficient land management programmes.

Conservationists are incorrigible planners—partly through necessity, as fragmentation demands "an ever more detailed and complex knowledge of the remaining [wildlife] interest"[42]—and its corollary, an ever more specialist and thus inaccessible conservation, reduced to a technical question. Continually sharpening management tools is not a bad thing in itself, but does seem part of the quest for the holy grail of the 'perfect plan', balancing every conceivable need, at which point everything will fall neatly into place. At worst, it smacks of the hubris of the technocrat, inhabiting an ordered, predictable and empirical universe—'the tyranny of the measurable'—and a reluctance to admit to uncertainty and doubt—'There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your management plan'. Not being armed with a plan is to go naked and exposed into the wood.

Market values permeate the conservationist worldview: "From economics have come words and ideas such as 'producers', 'consumers' and 'efficiency', and using them ecologists have interpreted ecological change as working like a modern industrial consumer society… [leaving] conservation with a strong legacy of an instrumentalist view of nature… [and] nature as system".[43]

But it's not quite this straightforward. Traditional ways of 'working' the land did at least enable some natural value to endure intact. Intensification on the other hand has meant the disappearance of even the commonplace[44], and a situation in which those areas which are 'zoned' for wildlife—like reserves—often have "no natural environment left in between them".[45] The archaic and unproductive "1930s agriculture that conservationists practice"[46] has become increasingly alienated from the rest of the countryside. Hence there is a tension in conservation. On the one hand there is an impetus to detach land from (at least) the modern, intensive form of economic circulation. Thus there is an implied critique of economic practices; both because, on a practical level, conservationists are only too well aware of the way in which they thwart and frustrate their best efforts, and philosophically, because of a sense of nature as being, at heart, unassimilable: other than and perhaps diametrically opposed to the economy. On the other hand, conservationists pursue a strategy of safeguarding and justifying ecological value by assigning economic value (the tail wagging the dog?): pricing, or 'enclosing', everything that moves (and some that doesn't)—running around with a butterfly net and a bar coder.[47] From this perspective the problem is not the market itself, but those things that hang in valueless limbo outside it. They must be reincorporated, if only by being enclosed within a policy framework.

As well as being self-serving squealing for more snout-space in the government trough, the following quote illustrates this well: "Neglect is a real issue, because the heathlands play no real role in any economic system and are simply not cared for. What is needed is better funding of conservation schemes which will enable owners and managers to produce the environmental goods that society now demands." [48]

Farming for Wildlife, Farming of Wildlife

The crisis now afflicting farming is the spectre haunting conservation. Their banal big idea, in response to the looming problems triggered by overproduction, liberalisation of world trade under the GATT Treaty and so on, is to reform the EU's



Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Apparently our basic structures are sound, it is just the details that need 'tweaking' or fine-tuning—'this is a job for the policy wonks'! (Some are even still resorting to an 'unfettered' free market—as opposed to the 'distortions' of the CAP—as the answer to all our woes.[49]) CAP subsidies will be redirected towards 'agri-environment' grants, the panacea which will help to reposition farming, and enable farmers to 'diversify'. Agriculture's new identity will primarily be as purveyor of intangible luxury "environmental goods", such as delivering 'biodiversity targets'—'farming for wildlife'—the food surplus presenting us with "a tremendous window of opportunity for redesigning the countryside for other purposes"[50]: in theory, making good those habitat losses. As the Council for National Parks say, "the main product is a wild and sustainable landscape, not stock or timber."[51] (Whether any of this is 'sustainable' is open to question—it hinges upon the continuation of surplus, and a highly sophisticated economy that is able to forego economic return on land and 'set it aside'.)

According to Raoul Vaneigem, "so brutal has the exploitation of nature been that its resources—the very nature of its profitability—are threatened with exhaustion; there is thus no choice but to develop ecological markets in order to get the economy out of its present morass."[52] Central to this is the task of devising 'virtuous products', along with 'virtuous jobs' like conservation—zealous self-alienation—working long hours for low pay, 'for the cause'.

'Farming for wildlife' readily becomes 'farming of wildlife': its discrete commodification (and heaven help those uncharismatic species that are left out in the cold, that can't be commodified[53]). For example, Landlife (see their profile in the Roundup) are administering the "Market Gardening with Indigenous Species" project, under which "local farmers will be planting wildflower crops [sic] thanks to a grant from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund".[54] (By the way, their National Wildflower Centre's mission is to promote "the creation of new habitats that have economic, environmental and ecological benefits for the nation."[55])

Many nature reserves already seem akin to 'beauty factories', governed by 'aesthetic productivism'. What are sometimes known as "physical outputs" are maximised; one manager, discussing the merits of non-intervention, bemoaned the fact that "funders [of reserves]… want to see action and colour"—hence coppicing, which "bring[s] about a short burst of bluebells and butterflies"[56]—'all fluttering, all flowering' habitats, practically on performance-related pay. Nature is "consumed in special places… and made to yield predictable products", becoming "one among a range of commodities that can be purchased by the wealthy to enhance their leisure time."[57]

'Reserve cramming' (like 'town cramming')—or 'high unit productivity'—is partly a consequence of fragmentation. For instance, "woods often act as reserves for the whole landscape, especially in intensively arable regions. Many… should be regarded as grassland reserves, as well as woodland reserves".[58] They must work flat out to be all things to all taxa—to 'please all of the species all of the time'. But "the more effort that is put in to make it rich, the further it departs from naturalness".[59]

With restoration there is also the temerity of 'zoning for wildlife'—striding grandly about the landscape, prescribing 'here a hay meadow, there a salt marsh' (but not there)—or 'this is a wood for butterflies, that one is for lichens' (a kind of 'comparative advantage'—hopefully with 'trickle down effect' benefits for other species.)

Reading RSPB[60] reports I am mesmerised by the dance of the graphs. Conservation is reminiscent of an EPOS (Electronic Point of Sale) stock-taking system, monitoring a steady stream of population data—eg. such-and-such has just made it into the Red Data Book (the species emergency list)—their stock is low—'Darren, we need more garganey'. The





habitat creation trucks then get rolling for this 'just in time' production, bringing new waders on line to match identified need.

Restoration and management for wildlife might actually have detrimental indirect effects on the surrounding area. 'Rewetting' of depleted wetland reserves may exacerbate the serious problem of water abstraction: it can cause the already degraded neighbouring countryside to become even drier and less hospitable, by creaming off what little surplus water there is.[61] These refugia might therefore consolidate habitat fragmentation, monopolising the wildlife, acting like a vortex which strips its hinterland of biodiversity, or like an out of town supermarket, emptying value out of its vicinity. For example, Pulborough Brooks in Sussex's Arun valley (see profile in the Roundup) now harbours "up to 75% of the total Arun valley wintering birds" every January. [62] While "bird counts on the reserve are soaring… counts for the area are still falling disastrously."[63] By concentrating the 'resource' like this, the very visible spectacular displays at Pulborough may be masking the decline rather than reversing it. (Although it seems likely that in the long run the whole of the Arun valley may actually benefit from Pulborough.)

In an era when the dollar is being encoded into DNA—the final, molecular, frontier of enclosure—the question 'what is nature?' is no longer just a matter for dry philosophical discourse.[64] David Helton reported on the 1992 meeting of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species), where the doctrine of 'sustainable utilisation'—and by extension, the question of nature's 'identity'—was up for grabs. Like 'farming for wildlife', it involves a species being "taken out of the economics of nature and brought into the economics of man [sic]"[65] and is heralded as "some kind of solution to the problems of human growth, both numeric and economic, without that growth having to stop". The rhino is "the one large mammal in the world whose existence is conspicuously threatened by international trade", and has therefore been purposefully excluded from the economic sphere by CITES. And yet, the proposal in 1992 was still to actually "harvest"' horn from live rhinos and "put [it]… on the legalised, reopened market", with the result that "rhinos would be paying their own way in the world."

Thankfully the proposal was rejected, but as Helton observes, the future foreshadowed by this approach "doesn't look like one worth living in, for people or rhinos either. The reason we save the rhino… is because it's… living wild on its own terms and deserving to. If we have to use emergency measures now… it's only so that some time in the future rhinos can return to their proper existence, in a world made sane again, with humanity under its own control and for the other species a normal wild life, not as livestock in a global barnyard—not with the rhino as some kind of tonic-producing cow, an ongoing business. It would almost be better off extinct." It's a clearcut choice, albeit one that has been foisted upon us: to "either stop growing or go for a desperate long shot and put absolutely everything under human management".[666]

Disturbing Climaxes

Natural succession is the "process of change in plant communities over time towards a natural climax, for example from grassland to scrub and then woodland."[67] Conservationists have been fighting the 'wars of succession' since at least the 1960s, in an attempt to retain those wildlife values that flow from continuity of traditional management features such as heathland. (It should be pointed out here that it can be very difficult to precisely define the 'traditional practices' that conservation harks back to.[68] Also, that arresting ecosystem change in this way has been pointedly compared to the futility of "trying to hold back a flood with a raincoat."[69]) However, conservationists are now beginning to stage what might be called a 'managed retreat' (a la Dunkirk?) from uni-





versally regulating such natural processes—perhaps 'learning to let go'.

The orthodox model of nature emphasised predictability and continuity. Change did figure in the equation, but only as part of an orderly and inexorable progression, with each stage in the succession obligingly laying down the conditions for the next, until it achieved a stable equilibrium—a relatively 'steady-state' (revealing term![70]) climax vegetation like woodland[71]. This is of course at least in part a cultural construct, reflecting the political climate out of which it sprang as much as it does nature. The theory "was strongly rooted in Darwinian ideas of biological evolution, and spin-off ideas of social 'progress' "[72]; redolent of a time of 'eternal verities', a naturally ordained and fixed social order and a linear and cumulative conception of history. Humanity was perched in its rightful place atop the evolutionary tree—the 'Crown of Creation', or 'climax species'—with the imputed hierarchy in nature serving to endorse the ranking of classes and races within humanity itself.

However, we now find that "climax, like the horizon, may be a useful concept, but it… can never be reached… when ecologists examined climax vegetation their studies were upset by disturbance. It soon became clear that disturbance was not an exception, a temporary upset, but a central part of the ecology of a habitat."[73] Disturbance, from grazing, windblow, fire, flooding, erosion and a host of other factors, is perpetually disrupting "the progression towards theoretical climax"[74], resetting the clock back. In a sense, 'there is no beginning and there is no end'—it's all process—an open-ended question. It has been pointed out that people respond to events rather than processes—particularly in spectacular society, where social phenomena are prised loose from their context and reproduced as disembodied and mystifying 'events'. (Conversely, ecology is, if nothing else, the story of context—the antithesis of spectacular amnesia.) Looked at in this light, nature reserves—managed as frozen moments in ecological time—represent soundbite or 'event' habitats.

This new-found taste for disturbance and uncertainty has led ecologists away from "nature as a well-behaved deterministic system"[75] towards "instability, disorder, a shifting world of upheaval and change that has no direction to it"[76] (Mao's 'permanent revolution', perhaps?!) Since "autonomy is [now] viewed as a fundamental characteristic of 'real' nature", it tends to operate as more of "a game than a controllable system".[77] This suggests possibilities of a more gratifying, 'sensuous' character to humanity's interactions with nature—as a 'player within the game', not an engineering outsider—whose role might be to "conserve the capacity of nature to re-create itself".[78]

Disturbance is the engine of ecological variety in the landscape, preventing those species that would dominate under (eg.) a closed canopy climax having it all their own way. There is what might be called a 'dialectic' between structure (such as the canopy) and disturbance here: "Too little disturbance leads to dominance of a few strong competitors, while a heavy disturbance regime [as in most of Britain] is tolerated only by a few hardy species."[79] Our best bet could be the supremely difficult practice of faithfully emulating the effects of natural disturbance—the conundrum of 'planning for chance'. We've already been unknowingly engaged in a form of this for centuries: "As the original wildwood became cleared and fragmented, disturbance from management gradually took over from natural disturbance… which can not operate on the small scale". However, this supplanting of natural processes by management represents a coarsening and simplification—only "some of the attributes of natural disturbance [have] continued"[80]—the effects of our management have been too uniform, and some crucial components have fallen by the wayside.

What Are We Missing?

"The ecological effect of most woodland management is to artificially remove the late mature and decaying elements of the regeneration cycle"[81], including the dead wood "which accounts for 50% of the timber in old forest"[82], and is "one of the two or three greatest resources of the woodland habitat".[83] Without this, we miss out on the "healthy fungal flora [which] contributes significantly to the ecological health of the wood"[84], by breaking the dead wood down and making its nutrients available to other plants. As Hambler and Speight point out, a whopping "70% of the energy flow through a terrestrial ecosystem is through the decomposer community"[85], including fungi. In our woodlands, this flow is blocked.

Another vital element is one that many of us only saw for the first time after the 1987 storm: the "pit and mound" topography formed by the upended root plates of toppled trees, which can cover "14—50% of the forest floor in some unmanaged American woods".[86] Ordinarily, rain leaches nutrients away from an undisturbed soil's surface. The upturned



trees instead turn and mix the soil, bringing nutrients back up to the surface and encouraging plant germination—acting as "an added degree of soil rejuvenation".

According to Tony Whitbread, "woodland soils would not naturally form, layer on layer, without… [such] mixing."[87] Deprived of such intrinsic features as these, who can now imagine the ensuing richness and vibrancy that our countryside lacks?

Finally, there are the "ecotones"—'twilight zones' where a palette of habitats melt seamlessly into and out of one another, in a kind of hybridising. "Many species rely on [this] interface between one habitat and another"[88], but not only do roads, intensive farming, etc, dismember this delicate habitat continuum, fluid "change is often prevented by management"[89] as well. For example, "there may be a sharp boundary between a wood and a hay meadow. Scrub invasion, left unchecked, would soon overwhelm the meadow, but the regime that resists it eliminates the ecotone instead. Such harsh zonation is often the only way to preserve habitat fragments, but leaves no room for natural processes to operate."[90] It is difficult to manage for ecotones[91], emblematic as they are of a dynamic, supple 'landscape of flux'—which leaves us with a straight choice between 'zoning' and 'process'. Zoning causes the pattern of habitats to ossify, in a kind of 'habitat reductionism'.

Work, and other 'socially polluting' alienated activities, can be seen as a 'habitat fragmentation' of the time of our lives; with 'management' leading to zoning—artificial disjunctions—and eliminating soft-edged ecotones. As Andre Gorz says, "The way our space is arranged carries on the disintegration of people that begins with the division of labour in the factory. It cuts a person into slices, it cuts our time, our life, into separate slices."[92] If you don't believe me, think about how your lunch hour feels (assuming you are still allowed one), or the slow, ominous countdown of a Sunday night.



Community Forests: 'screening industry'

The National Forest and the Community Forests—Managing People and Nature

The National Forest, the twelve Community Forests, and the activities of the Groundwork organisation (see Wren's Nest Estate profile in "Restoration Roundup") are all examples of a 'restoration' which is as much concerned with the management of people as it is of nature. The National Forest, which aims to create a "multi-purpose forest"[93] over 200 square miles of the Midlands, sees itself as "a model of 'sustainable development'".[94] The Community Forests are situated on the urban fringe of major English towns, subscribe to the same multi-function forestry framework, and constitute, allegedly, "the most significant environmental programme to be launched in Britain this century".[95] Pretty much as you'd expect, they are therefore crap. Both kinds of 'forest' have the superficially laudable goal of increasing Britain's pathetic average tree cover of 7% to around 30% in their area. However, 'multi-purpose forestry' is such that one of them actually thought it necessary to remind itself that "Trees will play a vitally important role in achieving the community forest".[96]

So puny are most of their new woodlands that they deserve to be known as "fun-sized" woods—in honour of the unsatisfying and 'anything but' Mars Bar of the same name.[97] It seems to be a case of drawing lines on a map and designating 'publicity' or 'policy forests', composed of 'enterprise glades'[98], the modern day bureaucrat's equivalent of the treeless 'Deer Forests' of Scottish feudalism. (There's no shortage of (bureaucratic) deadwood in these forests.) Since the objective is to "improve the image"[99], one gets the impression that they would be as content with just the "early impression of forest cover"[99] as with the real McCoy—so long as things are seen to be done.



The true agenda of Groundwork and the various forests is one of 'regeneration' and 'reclamation'. By and large they are superimposed on the former strongholds of heavy industry in the Midlands and the North—those areas most badly abused by and then, in the 1980s, abandoned by capitalism. It is about "managing change"[100]—using trees as a device to bring unsightly 'derelict land' back into economic circulation, and addressing agricultural overproduction through farm 'diversification' into forestry and leisure. It is about trying to ensure a smooth transition to the post-modern 'service' or 'information' economy, where the intangible environmental goods and 'quality of life' issues are paramount—eg. as at the new "Earth Centre", near Doncaster.[101] In the National Forest, "this regenerated coalfield land, which provided the local community with jobs in the past, will serve them in other ways in the future by providing recreational facilities, wildlife habitats and an attractive landscape."[102] It is about tailoring a flexible, 'multi-tasking' landscape for a flexible economy—the (relative) solidarity of the old heavy industries giving way to the (relative) atomisation of the casual, service sector—where, doubtless, we'll all work in "partnership".

The Red Rose Forest (Manchester) claim, in a particularly howling non-sequitur, that "economic, environmental and social regeneration cannot proceed without one another".[103] Providing "an attractive environment in which business can flourish"[104] is the Forests' main weapon in the mad, begging-bowl scramble to attract inward investment, giving them "a competitive advantage over competitor areas" [105]—a pitiful 'Pretty please' to developers. Because, more than anything else, "this forest means business"[106], if all goes according to plan these 'forests' might actually end up more heavily developed than before: "where… [planning] policies allow for increased industrial development, a high quality landscape can be a valuable first step in an area's revitalisation [sic]."[107] As well as having their office premises or surplus sites tarted up—what the Mersey


I HAVE CHANGED THEIR WORLD... AND THEIR GREATEST LEGENDS... COULD NOT STAND AGAINST ME.
AMIDST THE FIERCE JOY OF VICTORY... SOMETHING DARK FLUTTERS ACROSS MY MIND... AND IS GONE...
SOMETHING ABOUT POWER...



Forest calls "screen[ing] industry"[108], or landscaping as physical PR—usually at public expense, it offers another more subtle service to business. This is the 'philanthropic advantage' that comes when you "display your environmental credentials", helping to "generate goodwill… [and] raise… product and brand awareness".[109] Thus we have Manchester Airport supporting a trifling new tree planting programme—mulched with 'bioregional' Bollin Valley woodchips, no doubt—through the 'Manchester Aviation Tree Challenge', and sanctimonious noises about the "important part [that trees play] in reducing greenhouse gases and global warming."[110]

Nor have the older, more classically industrial uses entirely gone away. Grotesque 'planning gain' and 'end use' scams are rife: "Mining will continue to be a major activity within the Forest… The case for [minerals] development is certainly strengthened if the developer can show a benefit to the National Forest."[111] At Broxtowe in the Greenwood Community Forest (Nottinghamshire), "opencast mining operations" will, in the topsy-turvey world these people inhabit, "ultimately [bring]… about economic and environmental benefits": a new woodland of 14 hectares which will "provide an attractive backdrop" for a "new employment site of 8 hectares".[112] (This is presumably the kind of thing they have in mind when they talk of—in Groundwork's words—"integrating the economy and the environment".[113])

'Community', 'Partnership' and All That Jazz

All of this—particularly in the case of Groundwork—comes robotically decked out in odious communitarian jargon, such as 'stakeholding', 'capacity building', 'zero tolerance' (controlling 'anti-social behaviour' through environmental design[114]), 'participation' and 'partnership'. It is consistent with Blairite 'big tent' politics—subsuming most potential opponents and marginalising those that won't be co-opted.[115] The insidious weed of


MY DOUBTS VANISH... MELTING INTO THE FROSTED MORNING GRASS...
SOMETHING HAS CHANGED. THE CITY... HAS RELAXED... THE FIGHT GONE FROM IT. THE BATTLE... IS OVER. THE WAR... IS WON.
NOW... I HAVE ONLY... TO WAIT.



'partnership', with its smothering, spurious consensus (like being 'love bombed'), seems to be springing up everywhere nowadays. 'Partnership' mendaciously supposes that we all come to the table as equals, and, conveniently, that we all bear a shared responsibility for what has gone wrong—nasty, disruptive blame and dissension must not intrude on these mature deliberations. Class and other power differentials are submerged in the bland, ostensibly classless interest in 'saving the planet' (a 'union sacree')—political questions are reframed as dispassionate technical ones—the quest for the 'perfect plan' again. It's just a new way—their latest wheeze—for us to get screwed. "The cleverly constructed notion of "sustainable development" with its emphasis on harmonious consensus in decision-making, combined with the incorporation of the environment into the market system, has dissipated the imperative that environmental deterioration once had for social and political change."[116]

"Community"—partnership's medium—seems to be the elusive Philosopher's Stone of '90s politics; the supreme value before which—irrespective of political persuasion—we must all prostrate ourselves. (Interestingly, the term is most commonly used either where it patently does not exist—eg. 'the business…', 'international', the rural 'community' of the Countryside March—or where it is in some way threatened or in question—eg. 'the black…', 'the gay…')

Groundwork constantly brag of their presence in depressed, 'no go' areas—there is more than a hint of the 'community development' troops being parachuted in: "Throughout the western world states are characterised by one of the two symbols of control in capitalist society: the tank or the community worker".[117] The 'environmental' focus of the work also serves to locate the community's problems squarely within its own physical fabric, rather than as emanating from wider, structural forces—as if by simply beautifying the area, you will 'beautify' the social relationships that people experience.

The 'partnership' and 'participation' must only extend so far. The communities must not realise too uppity a sense of their own strength—which is to say, truly become a community—or the development workers and their political masters might become expendable. In the same way that capitalism, from the 1920s on, had to "simultaneously… encourage and repress the 'creation of dissatisfaction' "[118] if it was to shift its surplus goods, this 'community development' must simultaneously unleash and rein in empowerment. Like derelict land, 'derelict' communities are brought back into economic circulation, and their members enlisted in 'gilding their cage'. Forget building the Situationists' hacienda, mate—you don't want to do it like that—this is building the 'strategic hamlet'.

Local communities are deployed as proxies—a cost-effective means of delivering the desired results.[119] In a hidden subsidy to industry, we do the dirty work of clearing up the 'externalities' they leave behind. "Working in partnership with local authorities and businesses, Community Forests harness the commitment and enthusiasm of local people, mobilising them to regenerate their area".[120] (Oooh, it sounds so good since you put it like that.) Paul Goon (appropriately) of the government's 'English Partnerships' congratulates Groundwork on "their unrivalled ability to co-ordinate local communities, engender enthusiasm and deliver the goods at excellent value for money."[121] It echoes Paulette Goudge's comment on Third World aid, that " 'sustainable development' no longer refers to preserving the environment; it now means developments that communities can financially sustain themselves"[122]—the 'polluted pays' principle.

In contrast to the economy's 'flexible landscape', in which we are obliged to accept the loss of cherished features, as decreed, 'heritage' is constructed as a reassuring beacon of stability—'that which is forever England'. There is a tension between the frequent appeals to such sentiments of a 'common' heritage' ('our' patch), and otherwise jealously guarded property rights. It only becomes 'ours' when it suits them—we only get to inherit their cast off dregs, and must be suitably grateful when granted that much. (Many of the Groundwork and Community Forest sites are, for instance, former chemical waste dumps and landfills.) Perhaps the residents of the Amazon will one day be exhorted to restore 'their' forest, when it has finally been logged out for tremendous private gain. 'Bottom up' is employed to correct the miserable failures of 'top down'. However they choose to label the bottle it always tastes like shit—instead, we must choose 'praxis' over 'proxy'.

According to Ulrich Beck, the ecological movement is not so much "an environmental movement but a social, inward movement which utilises 'nature' as a parameter for certain questions."[123] While one can quibble with his distinction between the "environmental" and the "social", basically there's a lot of truth to this view. Perhaps the major revolutionary contribution of environmentalism (in



the broadest possible sense) is in exploring issues of control over space, the ways in which its use is currently determined, and the ways in which those uses can be radically transformed. These questions may have assumed a greater relative importance in recent years, given the seeming decline of the power to organise and act in the workplace. Like "the Street Party of street parties"[124], our very first need, (the one which prefigures and makes possible the rediscovery of all our myriad other needs), is for "a place in which people [can] gather—a common ground—and focus their attentions on things that could improve the quality of their general existence, and that of wildlife".[125] The act—of occupying a place and remaking it as a space used for interaction and renewal—is an answer to many of our questions in itself. Restoration can be harnessed to make the world safe for capital—by replenishing the regions whose profitability it has exhausted—or can create something which is inimical to it: headstrong communities savouring their own innate resourcefulness. When asked how people might spend their time after the revolution, Marcuse replied that "We will tear down the big cities and build new ones"[126]—whose "districts… could correspond to the whole spectrum of diverse feelings that one encounters by chance in everyday life"[127], multifarious nefarious space in which hitherto unrequited lives and blighted potential might at last find expression, freed from the monocultural dictates of capital. We are a very long way from that now, but wherever we see "the restoration of whole ecosystems and the empowerment of communities together"[128], its allure beckons, and we are another step closer.

Footnotes

1 "Revisiting Auroville", Alan Lithman, in "Helping Nature Heal: An Introduction to Environmental Restoration," Ed. Richard Nilsen, Whole Earth/Ten Speed Press 1991, p.96.
2 "An Explosion of Green", Bill McKibben, Atlantic Monthly April 1995, p.63.
3 "Planting Amenity Trees", Oliver Rackham, in "The Tree Book", J. Edward Milner, Collins and Brown 1992, p.152. For other examples, see also: "From Waste to Wildlife", Charles Couzens, Natural World Winter 1992; "Orchids rise from the ashes", New Scientist 30/9/95; "Return to Paradise", Laura Spinney, New Scientist 20/7/96; "A real waste", Fred Pearce, New Scientist 11/4/98; "The Lowdown on Dirt", Chris Baines, BBC Wildlife Nov. 1990.
4 "Wild By Design in the National Parks of England and Wales", Council for National Parks 1997, p.14.
5 Ibid, p.11.
6 Actually, this was a misprint of "quiet areas" in a management plan, but the voices in my head made it seem like a good idea at the time.
7 "Aftermath", Richard Mabey, BBC Wildlife October 1997. Toy's Hill, Kent is cited as a particularly good case study; the cleared areas needed planting, and are still struggling, while the uncleared are experiencing "prolific regrowth".
8 "Setting the Scene for Growth", The Mersey Forest, p.3.
9 Gar Smith, in "Pitfalls on the Way to Lasting Restoration", Seth Zuckerman, in Op.Cit.1, p.12.
10 Eg. see: "General information about habitat creation", Habitat Restoration Project Factsheet 1, English Nature, undated, p.2; "Habitat Creation—A Critical Guide", D.M. Parker, English Nature Science Report 21, 1995, p.1.
11 Eg. see: "Can you really move places?", Trevor Lawson, BBC Wildlife January 1997; "Removals no go" [on Teigngrace], Trevor Lawson, BBC Wildlife September 1998; "Sod Off", [on Ashton Court] SchNEWS 183.
12 See: "The Environment Industry: Profiting from Pollution", Joshua Karliner, The Ecologist March/April 1994. For Thorne and Hatfield, see: "Bogged down in details", Catherine Caufield, The Guardian 24/9/97; "English Nature in mire over bog", David Harrison, The Observer 30/11/97.
13 World Wide Fund for Nature "Forests" Supplement to The Observer, 1992, p.10.
14 "Natural Restoration—When Humans Walk Away", Susan E. Davis, in Op.Cit.1, p.22/23.
15 "Creative conservation: a way forward", Richard Scott and Grant Luscombe, Ecos 16 (2) 1995, p.13. See also: "General information about habitat creation", Op.Cit.10., p.3.
16 Eg. See "Habitat Restoration Project: Factsheets and Bibliographies", Rob Dryden, English Nature Research Reports No. 260, 1997.
17 See "Future Nature—a vision for conservation", W.M. Adams, Earthscan 1996, p.168.
18 See Op.Cit.4, p.12; Also pp.9,14,42. See debate on p.12 regarding 'future nature'.
19 Op.Cit.17, p.169.
20 Ibid, p.166.
21 River Restoration News 1, November 1998, p.3.
22 "Biodiversity Conservation in Britain: Science Replacing Tradition", Clive Hambler and Martin Speight, British Wildlife February 1995, p.144.
23 See "The Eternal Threat: Biodiversity Loss and the Fragmentation of the Wild" in *Do or Die* 5 for a fuller explanation of this process. Also, "Conserving wildlife in a black hole", Adrian Colston, Ecos 18 (1) 1997, p.65, for an excellent example.
24 "Habitat restoration—recanting the status quo", Rob Jarman, Ecos 16 (2) 1995, p.31.
25 Eg. See "Gambling with nature? A new paradigm of nature and its consequences for nature management strategy", Johan van Zoest, in "Coastal Dunes—Geomorphology, Ecology and Management for Conservation", Eds. Carter et al., Balkema 1992, p. 515.
26 See: "Some Like it Hot", Markham et al, WWF-International 1993; especially p.121 and pp.125-128.
27 See: "Nature Strikes Back!", Jack Straw [shurely shome mishtake?], Fifth Estate Summer 1994.
28 "A Natural Method of Conserving Biodiversity in Britain", A. Whitbread and W. Jenman, British Wildlife 7 (2), December 1995, p.84.
29 Eg. See "Global Warming/Global Warning: Plant the Right Tree", Marylee Guinon, in Op.Cit.1, p.44.
30 Eg. See "Lowland Valley Mires" and "Restoration of Valley Mires", New Forest LIFE Project Information Sheets, Forestry Commission, undated—"The New Forest contains



90 of the 120 valley mires in Europe".)
31 "To Learn the Things We Need to Know", Freeman House, in Op.Cit.1, p.50.
32 "Farming the City—The Potential of Urban Agriculture", Tara Garnett, The Ecologist November/December 1996, p.305.
33 "Changing Places" booklet, BBC Natural History Unit, February 1999, p.5.
34 Op.Cit.17, p.173.
35 Eg. See Op.Cit.32, p.299; also "Cultivated Cities", BBC Wildlife, August 1996, p.56. See: "World Hunger: 12 Myths", Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, Earthscan 1988, Chapter 6, for examples of the vastly increased efficiency of small farmers as opposed to large ones.
36 However, see Op.Cit.22 for a convincing argument that traditional practices are antagonistic to wildlife.
37 'Twitcher', in British Wildlife February 1998, p.175.
38 Op.Cit.17, p.xi.
39 Ibid, p.162.
40 Ibid. See also: Op.Cit.4, p.7.; Op.Cit.22, p.139; Op.Cit.28, p.85, 86 and 87; "When the Wind Blew", Tony Whitbread, RSNC February 1991, p.22; "Laird of Creation", Richard Mabey, BBC Wildlife January 1992, p.30.
41 Eg. see: Op.Cit.4, p.10.
42 Op.Cit.28, p.87.
43 Op.Cit.17, p.163. See also: "Bionomics—The Inevitability of Capitalism", Michael L. Rothschild, Futura 1992. For a view affirming pleasure for its own sake—in contrast to these mechanistic models of animal behaviour—as part of nature, see "Watching Birds", Peter Porcupine, Here and Now 18, Winter 1997/98. ('Birds just want to have fun'.) See also "When Elephants Weep—The Emotional Lives of Animals", Jeffrey Masson and Susan McCarthy, Jonathan Cape 1994.
44 Eg. see the British Trust for Ornithology's deeply depressing "Common [sic] Birds Census".
45 Op.Cit.24, p.29.
46 Op.Cit.28, p.86.
47 Eg. see: "Laird of Creation", Richard Mabey, BBC Wildlife January 1992, p.33.
48 Sean Reed, RSPB, quoted in "A do-something charter", BBC Wildlife May 1998, p.31.
49 Eg. see: "The Killing of the Countryside", Graham Harvey, Vintage 1998; also: "Is there life after subsidies? The New Zealand experience", Gordon Stephenson, Ecos 18 (3/4) 1997.
50 "Plenty and Wilderness? Creating a new countryside", Bryn Green, Ecos 16 (2) 1995, p.3.
51 Op.Cit.4, p.17.
52 "The Movement of the Free Spirit", Raoul Vaneigem, Zone Books 1994, p.8.
53 Eg. see "The Bap and the ugly", Trevor Lawson, Guardian 6/8/98. These 'Biodiversity Action Plans' for particular endangered species, with their private sponsorship, seem to have a similar effect to 'Education Action Zones', and the 'Private Finance Initiative' in the health service. (See the comments on the possibility of a 'two-tier' reserve system in " 'Beyond 2000'—will it deliver?", Trevor Lawson, Ecos 18 (3/4) 1997, p.58.) Also, under the Earth Summit's Biodiversity Convention, scientists have apparently come to the 'pragmatic' conclusion that not everything can be saved. They have therefore decided to concentrate on those species of potential benefit to us—glorified Research & Development.
54 Landlife Annual Report 1997/98, p.7.
55 Ibid, p.4.
56 "Biodiversity in Conservation" letter, Matthew Frith, British Wildlife August 1995, p.405.
57 Op.Cit.17, p.173.
58 Fuller and Peterken, quoted in "Management for Biodiversity in British Woodlands—Striking a Balance", Robert Fuller and Martin Warren, British Wildlife October 1995, p.36.
59 "Ancient Woodland: A Re-creatable Resource?", Keith Kirby, Tree News Summer 1992, p.13.
60 Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.
61 Eg. See "Hydrological Management for Waterfowl on RSPB Lowland Wet Grassland Reserves", Self et al, RSPB Conservation Review 8, 1994.
62 "Restoration of lowland wet grassland at Pulborough Brooks RSPB Nature Reserve", Timothy Calloway, in "UK Floodplains: Proceedings of a Joint RSPB, Linnaen Society, Environment Agency Symposium", Eds. Bailey et al., Westbury Publishing 1998.
63 "Nature and Nurture", Maev Kennedy, "A Living Countryside", RSPB/Co-op Bank supplement to The Guardian, undated, p.11.
64 Eg. See "The End of Nature", Bill McKibben, Viking 1990.
65 "Sustainable Tuesday", David Helton, BBC Wildlife, May 1992, p.46.
66 Ibid, p.47.
67 Op.Cit.4, p.9.
68 Eg. see: Op.Cit.22, p.141; Op.Cit.58, p.29/30; Op.Cit.24, p.30; Op.Cit.61, p.47.
69 "Pitfalls on the Way to Lasting Restoration", Seth Zuckerman, in Op.Cit.1, p.13.
70 Founded on an assumption that empires aren't fleeting and anomalous—that they won't appear and disappear, as habitats do.
71 Or possibly peatland—eg. see: "Forests destined to end in the mire", Fred Pearce, New Scientist 7/5/94.
72 "Natural Restoration—When Humans Walk Away", Susan E. Davis, in Op.Cit.1, p.23.
73 "When the Wind Blew", Tony Whitbread, RSNC February 1991, p.32.
74 Ibid, p.34.
75 Op.Cit.25, p.510.
76 David Cayley quoted in Op.Cit.17, p.163.
77 Op.Cit.25, p.503. Although, inexplicably, van Zoest goes on to say that "autonomous processes are allowed or stimulated as long as they lead to the desired goals". (p.514.) While this may be a good working description of liberal democracy, it is not "autonomy", which must surely be unconditional—'the quality of autonomy is not strained…'
78 Op.Cit.17, p.163.
79 Op.Cit.25, p.507.
80 Op.Cit.73, p.59.
81 David Streeter, quoted in "On the Sidelines", Richard Mabey, BBC Wildlife October 1990, p.728.
82 Op.Cit.7, p.74.
83 Charles Elton, quoted in Op.Cit.22, p.144.
84 Op.Cit.73, p.12.
85 Op.Cit.22, p.142.
86 Op.Cit.73, p.41.
87 Ibid, p.15.



88 Op.Cit.28, p.86.
89 Op.Cit.73, p.44.
90 Op.Cit.28, p.86.
91 Eg. see Op.Cit.73, p.51.
92 "Dear Motorist… The Social Ideology of the Motorcar", Andre Gorz, Institute of Social Disengineering, undated, p.8.
93 National Forest Company Annual Report 1997/98.
94 Chairman's Comment, National Forest News Autumn 1998, p.2.
95 "Thames Chase: Community Forest Facts" information sheet, undated.
96 Forest Plan Summary, Great Western Community Forest March 1994, p.6. See also "Magic Forest up Mr. Downing's Street", Greenwood Community Forest Annual Report 1996/97, p.11, and the National Forest Corporate Plan, July 1997, for similar inane remarks.
97 English Nature recommends that "New woodlands should be a minimum of 2 hectares in area, and preferably larger than 5 hectares", if they are to be of any value. ("Woodland creation for wildlife", EN Habitat Restoration Project Fact Sheet 3.) "In England more than 50% of approved Woodland Grant Schemes [the main financial mechanism for new planting] were under 3 hectares and over 75% were under 10 hectares". (Op.Cit.4, p.35.) In the Red Rose Community Forest, much of the planting "was on plots averaging 2.35 hectares in size." (Red Rose Community Forest Annual Report 1997/8, p.3.)
98 This is the actual address of the National Forest, if you can believe it.
99 Op.Cit.8.
100 Forest Plan Summary, Great Western Community Forest March 1994, p.4.
101 Eg. see "Phoenix Park", John Vidal, The Guardian 24/3/99.
102 Scumbag head of the Forestry Commission David Bills (see *Do or Die* 7, p.19) in National Forest News, Autumn 1998, p.3.
103 Lord Macclesfield, in "Red Rose Forest—A Place for Life", Red Rose Forest, undated, p.2. (I can only assume he must be talking about the famous Manchester on Mars, because it can't be on my planet.)
104 Councillor Round, quoted in "Invest in the Success of the Mersey Forest", The Mersey Forest, undated.
105 "Community Forests", Countryside Commission Fact Sheet 1994, quoted in ibid. Other fawning references to inward investment in Forest literature are too numerous, and too nauseating, to mention.
106 Forest News 7, Forest of Avon, Autumn/Winter 1998, p.2.
107 Op.Cit.95.
108 Op.Cit.99. Also: "Gaining public acceptance… [by] improving the image of development" in Op.Cit.104.
109 Op.Cit.99, p.5.
110 Op.Cit.103, p.24.
111 Susan Bell, Countryside Commission, in "Greening the Heart of England", Fred Pearce, New Scientist 24/9/94, p.33. See p.35 here for an excellent summation of the bullshit of the National Forest in action.
112 Greenwood Community Forest Annual Report 1995/96, p.10.
113 One of their "three key themes" in: "Environments for people", Groundwork Information Sheet, undated.
114 Eg. See 'Direct Action News' (oh my god!) 19, Autumn 1998, Groundwork Creswell/Ashfield & Mansfield, p.4; "Bringing people into the process", Groundwork Today 26, undated, p.7.
115 The textbook strategy of 'greenwashers' worldwide—see " 'Democracy' for Hire: Public Relations and Environmental Movements", John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton, The Ecologist September/October 1995. Also: "Environmental groups and the business community: A fatal attraction?", Jamie Wallace, Ecos 18 (3/4) 1997.
116 Review of "Conflict Resolution: Cross-Cultural Perspectives", Eds. Avruch et al, by Sharon Beder, The Ecologist November/December 1994, p.236.
117 "Community Work and the State", Eds. Craig et al, Routledge and Kegan Paul 1982, p.2. However, it would be a mistake to think that these are communities threatening "militant working-class action"—instead, they are mostly experiencing "the inchoate rather than the organised working-class response to the changes taking place in advanced capitalist society" ("Hard lines and soft options: a criticism of some left attitudes to community work, J. Smith, in "Political Issues and Community Work", Ed. P. Curno, Routledge 1978, p.23)—responses such as crime, vandalism, drug (ab)use, family breakdown, etc.
118 "Scenes from a California Maul: Execution and Riot", Red Wood, Fifth Estate, Autumn 1992, p.7.
119 See the remarkably frank Majid Rahnema, quoted in "The Business of Conservation, or the Conservation of Business?", *Do or Die* 6, p.23.
120 "What are Community Forests?", Countryside Commission leaflet, undated.
121 Quoted in: "Wren's Nest Agenda for the 21st Century", Groundwork Black Country leaflet, undated.
122 "Own Goals", Paulette Goudge, The Guardian 17/3/99.
123 Quoted in a review of his "Ecological Politics in an Age of Risk", Ecos 16 (2) 1995, p.76.
124 See "Reclaim the Streets", *Do or Die* 6, p.6.
125 "It's an orchard, Jim—but not as we know it: Community orchards and Local Agenda 21", Duncan MacKay, Ecos 18 (1) 1997, p.47.
126 Quoted in Op.Cit.92.
127 "Formulary for a New Urbanism", Ivan Chtcheglov, 1953. If you will allow me to sketch in some of the intoxicating possibilities ('moveable feasts'—the 'instantly revocable delegates of the landscape'), in what might be the world's most self-indulgent footnote: orchards, beekeeping, community composting, reedbeds, pleasure gardens, adventure playgrounds, orreries, ponds, 'abandoned' wilderness ('a dark wood'), hanging gardens, greenhouses, moots, dance halls, speakeasies (shebeens), helter skelters, dance halls, climbing walls, bandstands, rockeries, cairns, stupas, prayer wheels, dovecotes, samizdat (community) walls, zen gardens, windmills/turbines, pagodas, hollow hills/earth houses, houseboats, raft villages, mudslides, burrows and tunnels, gigantic mirrors reflecting one another, gongs, amphitheatres, trampolines, mazes, rope swings, bouncy castles, flags, kites (as in the Pakistani kite festivals), trellis walkways, an intractable swamp, sacred groves, maypoles, topiary, sundials, follies, mushroom cellars, haylofts, stills, birdtable and birdbath forests, wicker men, giant metronomes, 'Ames rooms', stockades, crypts… this gets addictive, I must stop now and take my pills. Even if you don't like my suggestions, they are intended merely to give a sense of the wealth of opportunities available to us in 'dealienated' settlements. Spare a thought for your own

Restoration Round-up

This is not an exhaustive survey of the ecological restoration projects taking place in the UK, nor is it intended to be. Wales and the West Country are pretty much unrepresented, and Scotland is over represented—and there's probably a Sussex bias too! Fears over the disappearance of Scotland's 'Great Wood of Caledon' have built up a real head of steam in recent years, and this has translated into both a high level of activity and the existence of various umbrella organisations, which makes it a lot easier to find out what's actually going on. Without being completely representative, this Roundup is meant to act as an introduction to the huge range of restoration work—some good, some not so good—currently underway. Hopefully it will be a useful resource to help you get involved with those projects that you find most inspiring—or better still, set up your own! (The featured projects are listed in no particular order—and for any number-crunchers (mmm, tasty!) out there, to convert acre figures into hectares, divide by 2.471.)

Wealden Wildwood

"Imagine being able to visit before you die a wilderness in lowland Britain"—Tony Whitbread, Sussex Wildlife Trust.[1] This is a proposal for a 5-10,000 hectare 'near-natural forest' in the Weald of West Sussex—gradually filling in the gaps between two existing, largely unmanaged woodland reserves, by encouraging farmers to take their low-grade agricultural land out of production, and allowing natural regeneration to take over. The emphasis will be on giving natural processes free rein, through windblow, erosion, grazing herbivores, and so on. Some grazers—eg. wild boar or pigs, and hardy feral cattle and horses (as in the New Forest, or Holland's amazing Oostvaardersplassen reserve)—will have to be introduced, and allowed to develop natural herd structures. It is to be hoped that the project will begin to progress from its current 'vision' stage towards lush reality in the near future.[2]

Sussex Wildlife Trust
Woods Mill
Nr. Henfield
West Sussex BN5 9SD
Tel.: 01273 492630

Reflooding the Fens

The once vast and varied swampy landscape of the Fens is one of the most thoroughly devastated ecosystems in the country—its original features almost entirely erased by drainage and subsequent cultivation, with only about ten Fenland fragments surviving in the overall area of 1500 square miles—99.5% lost since 1820![3] And all for what? The drainage and flood control is tremendously expensive to maintain, and the peaty soils acidify, erode and simply blow away when farmed—causing the land to visibly sink. Nor have the remaining fen oases escaped unscathed—it's near impossible to stay wonderfully wet in this parched landscape. To reverse this dessication and decline comes the proposal to recreate a 12,000 acre expanse linking remnant habitat at Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen National Nature Reserves. A feasibility study into hydrological and other factors is currently underway, with the project envisaged as starting within the next five years, and taking up to twenty five years to acquire all the necessary land. The area will still support economic uses—'rewetting' is seen as a cost-effective form of flood management, 'biomass crops' like reeds and willow may be harvested (as in the historic Fenland economy), tourism will be encouraged—and it will entail substantial manipulation of water levels to be viable. However, it will herald the re-emergence of a lost landscape in a part of the country that, while once so vibrant, is now described as "a black hole for wildlife". Similar work is going on at the National Trust's Wicken Fen, and the RSPB's Nene Washes, in Cambridgeshire.[4]

Brian Eversham
c/o The Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs, Northants and Peterborough
3B Langford Arch
London Road
Sawston
Cambridge CB2 4EE
Tel: 01223 712400

Glen Affric—Trees for Life

The Caledonian pine forests of Scotland are "believed to be closer to the original natural conditions than any other woodland type in Britain"[5]—they are also one of the most badly abused, having been exploited down to a tiny fraction of their former range (see "No Evolution Without Revolution", *Do or Die* 6.) They are in a critical state, consisting primarily of aged Scots Pine (this habitat's 'keystone species') that are coming to the end of their seed-bearing life-span. Glen Affric, in the North-central Highlands, harbours one of the core fragments, "the largest native forest area least affected by the hand of



man in the UK".[6] Trees for Life have been working here since 1989, motivated by a compelling wilderness vision of reforesting the whole 600 square mile roadless area and reintroducing missing species like beaver, wolves, lynx, moose and bears. Alongside Forest Enterprise, the National Trust for Scotland and others, they have been installing fencing (to allow natural regeneration free of deer grazing), planting trees where there is no seed source, felling non-native conifers, removing redundant fences, surveying and so on. They also run a programme of volunteer work weeks—well worth going on, especially if you're partial to midges and (my personal favourite) ticks. Bloody wild nature! Just one criticism: accepting sponsorship off BP suggests a motto of "Never Mind the Death Squads, Here's the Tree Planting". (But what do you expect from a bunch of apolitical hippies anyway?)

Trees for Life
The Park
Findhorn Bay
Forres IV36 3TZ
Scotland
Tel: 01309 691292

Beachy Head Chalk Grassland

Chalk grassland is an almost entirely man-made habitat carved out of the original wildwood, several thousand years ago—but its fragrant springy turf does "encompass very high biodiversity at a small scale. Indeed, it is probably the richest habitat at this scale in northwest Europe."[7] Like most other such 'semi-natural' landscapes, it has suffered appalling losses—around 80-95%. Between 1991 and 1996, Eastbourne Borough Council in Sussex took over 300 acres of its downland estate between Beachy Head and the Belle Tout lighthouse out of arable production, sowing the site with a characteristic grass/wildflower seed mix. Work to 'defertilise' the nutrient-enriched farmland has helped the mix to establish well, and it is hoped that this will be supplemented by long-suppressed species from the soil's seed bank, as well as by colonisation from neighbouring undisturbed areas. Still, there's a long way to go: mature, ancient chalk grassland communities are notoriously difficult to recreate, taking "at least 150 to 200 years to become established"[8], with some species possibly needing a thousand years to recover![9]

Downland Ranger
Tourism and Community Services Department
Eastbourne Borough Council
College Road
Eastbourne
East Sussex BN21 4JJ
Tel: 01323 415267

Carrifran Wildwood

The Scottish Borders (or 'Southern uplands'), although less well-known than the Highlands, are possibly even more deforested—with "less than 0.1% of Peeblesshire… covered in anything approaching natural woodland—one of the lowest figures in Britain."[10] However, the Wildwood Group of the Borders Forest Trust now plan to restore an entire denuded watershed, the 1500 acres of the Carrifran valley, "to its original wilderness state as an example of the 'Wildwood'".[11]

It is not just the bold wilderness scope of this project, juxtaposed with its deeply degraded setting, that captures the imagination. Carrifran's altitude ranges from 180m (594 ft) up to 820m (2706 ft), so that ultimately "a 'natural' transition from woodland through montane [mountain] scrub to montane heath could develop, with the possible establishment of tree line and scrub line"[12]—a continuum, from watershed to waterfoot. This encompasses three features which are severely restricted in the modern British context: natural woodland to the treeline, with distinct woodland types and their associated fauna as you progress up the hill; 'ecotones', or soft-edged 'interims' between one habitat and another; and the reappearance of the important but admittedly rather dull sounding 'montane willow scrub' habitat. (Work to restore this is also taking place at the Creag Meagaidh, Ben Lawers and Ben Wyvis National Nature Reserves in Scotland.)





The project needs to raise 350,000 by late 1999 for the land purchase, with over half the total raised so far. Then they will establish the wildwood "in a large part of the site within ten years"[10], and coax it into becoming a self-sustaining system.[13]

Borders Forest Trust
Monteviot Nurseries
Jedburgh
Scotland TD8 6TU.
Tel: 01835 830750.

Gwen Finch Wetland Reserve

Otters' range has been drastically reduced throughout the UK this century, by a combination of pollution, hunting and the loss of suitable habitat—eg, the 'canalisation' of most British rivers, especially in the lowlands. (This has also been the downfall of water voles, at least as much as the presence of mink.) Otters are slowly beginning to bounce back, spreading east and south from their strongholds in the West Country, Wales and Scotland. They are a good 'indicator' species for the health of riverine systems, as they require relatively pure water and abundant riparian (riverside) vegetation.

The River Severn Otter Project are supporting this recovery with the purchase of twenty hectares of floodplain land in the Avon valley, near Pershore, Worcestershire. From a barren, 'improved' and drained field they intend to create the new Gwen Finch Wetland Reserve: "a mosaic of wet habitats"[14], with the largest reedbed in the county, four artificial otter holts, deep open water, wet grassland and willow carr. Carr—wet woodland—is perhaps the most notable of these. Once covering "most floodplain habitat in the UK"[15], it is now "almost entirely lost".[16] As with other projects engaged in raising "the water table… to restore the relationship between the river and its floodplain"[14], the many problems of carving out an isolated wet haven necessitate "significant land-forming works"[14] and extensive regulation of water flows. Work started early in 1999.

Andy Graham/River Severn Otter Project
c/o Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
Lower Smite Farm
Hindlip
Worcester WR3 8SZ
Tel: 01905 754919

Apple Tree Court, Salford.

"In ecological terms, the inner city is a desert. We need to relearn the techniques of sustainable, permanent household agriculture and apply them to places like Salford."[17] Strangely for a nation of city dwellers, urban ecological restoration is often passed over. The Apple Tree Court estate in Pendleton, Salford, illustrates some of the best and worst characteristics of its current practice. Over the last three years, a tower block under a (limited) form of community management has demonstrated "how previously derelict housing and landscape and demoralised communities can be transformed through local community action."[18] A wasteland of concrete and rubble around the block has been "fenced and transformed into… community gardens, with a three-tier orchard, vegetable allotments, ponds, mini-wildlife reserve, native species woodland coppice, wildflower meadows and a large… geodesic community dome."[18] A food co-operative sells the organic produce cheaply to the tenants, and supplies the community café in the dome. The residents now also "plan to use the waste heat from the building to grow food in polytunnels on the roof".[19]

Who can argue with this? It is the sort of local self-governance that lies at the heart of many an anarchist's vision. As the administrator of the tenant-managed company points out, this "urban oasis has changed lives already… We have our own space, somewhere secure we can sit and almost believe we are in the country. We will soon be able to look out of the conservatory on our beautiful gardens and orchards, where only a few years ago there was concrete and car parks".[18]

Unfortunately, such projects are usually tainted with Blairite, state-sponsored (and state-sponsoring?) communitaran dross, including collaboration with the New Deal and making use of "help" from people on community service [non-custodial sentence]. Still, despite these regressive aspects, in essence they contain the seeds of so much more.

Tony Milroy/John Watts
Arid Lands Initiative
Machpelagh Works
Burnley Road
Hebden Bridge
W. Yorkshire HX7 8AU
Tel: 01422 843807

Glen Finglas

The Woodland Trust are embarking on an ambitious reforestation project at their newly acquired Glen Finglas site in the South-central Highlands. "One of the largest hill farms in Scotland",[20] Glen Finglas covers 10,300 acres, only 620 acres of which are hard-pressed native woodland fragments, heavily grazed by an incredible 3,400 ewes and 100 cattle!



The plan is for a massive expansion of tree cover up to nearly 7,500 acres of the site, with an impressively high proportion (nearly 6000 acres) envisaged as arising from natural regeneration. This will link "the dispersed fragments of ancient woodland to create in 30-40 years time possibly the largest native broadleaved wood in Scotland".[21] As of autumn 1998, 880 acres had already been planted or allowed to regenerate within new deer fencing. However, it does seem hard to reconcile the undeniable need to scale down the grazing pressure with the Trust's avowed intention to "realise the area's potential for recreation and livestock farming to retain employment in the glens".[20] Also, in common with Abernethy (see Profile, p. 179) and others, their desire to "reduce the deer population to a level compatible with natural regeneration by 1999" suggests that a heavy cull is on the cards. (For a discussion of this issue, see "No Evolution Without Revolution", *Do or Die* 6, p.39—views on culling and the 'deer question' are still invited!)[22]



Pound Farm, Suffolk

The 223 acre Pound Farm, near Saxmundham in Suffolk, was the Woodland Trust's first 'Woodland Creation Scheme' site. Previously in arable production, and with only 11 acres of existing woodland, between 1989 and 1993 160 acres of new woodland were created at Pound Farm with the planting of 70,000 trees. Part of the planted area has been left open to allow sunny, grassy 'rides' to develop. A further 50 acres were sown with a species-rich meadow mixture, grubbed out hedgerows replanted, and five ponds restored—reflecting the desirability of having a mixture of habitats, and variety in the woodland structure.

Without belittling these achievements, there is a general cautionary point to be made: obviously, rich habitats do not spring fully-formed into being. First, efforts to reconstruct most 'semi-natural' habitats on ex-arable or other 'improved' land must tackle the perennial problem of 'defertilising' the soil. Second, a related issue which specifically affects woodland creation is that while it is fairly straightforward to 'install' the trees, the distinctive ground flora lags a long way behind.[23] Lacking this, and perhaps other essential components, a new wood can seem like a bit of a hollow shell; a roof without a floor. But this is something that should change with time.[24]

Hucking Court, Kent

The Hucking Court Estate, purchased by the Woodland Trust in 1997, is 390 acres of arable land and 180 acres of woodland in the North Downs near Maidstone in Kent—unfortunately sandwiched between the M2 and the M20 motorways. By combining natural regeneration with the planting of 200,000 trees from October 1998 onwards, the Trust intend to expand the woodland by over 200 acres. Hedgerows will also be reinstated. Another 106 acres, through the dry valleys, will be sown and maintained as chalk grassland, linking up with adjoining scarp slope areas outside the estate. The remainder will be kept as more conservation-friendly, low intensity arable farming. Hucking Court, Pound Farm and many other projects contribute to the Trust's goal of creating 1600 hectares (3850 acres) of new native woodland between 1998-2003.[25]

The Woodland Trust
Autumn Park
Grantham
Lincolnshire NG31 6LL
Tel: 01476 581111





Greenham Common, Berkshire

The closure of Greenham Common Air Base in 1992/3, and its purchase by a public/private sector partnership in 1997, has set the scene for an unparalleled programme of deconstruction and revegetation. With most of the base infrastructure razed, and "one of the largest runways in Europe"[26] ripped up, it should provide a happy contrast to the building of Manchester's second runway. By the end of 1999, 950,000 tonnes of concrete (covering 235 acres) and the 8 million gallon capacity underground fuel system will have been removed, and the ground decontaminated. The vision is then to regain the original matrix of grassland, heathland, wood pasture, wet alder woods and mossy mires—making up a natural complex with Bowdown and Chamberhouse Woods SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and Thatcham Reedbeds nearby. (So at least one side of Newbury will be worth living in!) Substantial areas levelled or infilled by the base are to be relandscaped, to give an irregular topography of hollows and humps with a range of microclimatic niches. Resumption of grazing by the commoners and others over most of the 1200 acre site will maintain it as heathland, the huge almost entirely roadless expanse providing "a rare and impressive experience in lowland England".[27] Under the INF Treaty, the missile silos must remain under the control of the Ministry of Defence until 2006. Although this is allegedly "an important heritage site"[28], unconfirmed rumours suggest that the silos could be converted into bat caves—fulfilling their true vocation at last, the only worthwhile memorial to the lunatic idiocy of the Cold War, making irresistible poetic sense. Please lobby the Project (see address below) to make sure this happens.

It aims not to "eliminate the site's history as an air base but to soften the remains by removing all but the most significant buildings and clothing the runways and mounds with heathland vegetation".[27] The runway control tower is to be retained, standing forlorn and incongruous, now presiding over nothing but sand lizards and stone curlews.

(Disappointingly, the restoration is contingent upon the 140 acre 'New Greenham Park' business development—in a somewhat unlikely arrangement, this will "pay all of its profits to the [Greenham Common] Trust for use in the restoration… and for distribution to good causes in the area".)[29]

Ed Cooper
Greenham and Crookham Commons Project
West Berkshire Council
Sundial House
63 Cheap Street
Newbury
Berkshire RG14 5BT
Tel: 01635 519347

Wren's Nest Estate, Dudley

Urban environmental restoration at the Wren's Nest Estate, Dudley, embodies many of the same possibilities and limitations as the work at Apple Tree Court (see p. 176). After doggedly pressing the local council for years to upgrade their atrocious housing stock and inadequate facilities, the residents finally won a variety of environmental improvements. For instance—shades of Claremont Road (M11) perhaps?—"many tenants gave up derelict areas of long back gardens—covered in tonnes of rubbish and infested with rats—to create communal areas including an orchard, allotment and even a vineyard."[30] The allotments will help to tackle the severe health problems of many of the residents, "by providing both good exercise and healthy food at low cost"[31], distributed through the estate by a food co-op. A gar-



den tools library is also planned. One local says "I feel the whole estate has changed for the better and people have a sense of belonging."[30]

While it would be patronising and fatuous to begrudge them this, I have a queasy feeling that this is empowerment for the purposes of control—conditional—to go this far but no further. They have implicitly laid collective claim to political and physical space—the first tentative flowering of mutual aid?—but under the watchful patrician eye of the authorities. Not all communities will be able to attract Wren's Nest's 100 million funding—but then again, is such money (and the tier of 'consultants' et al that goes with it) absolutely necessary to bring about change? In Wren's Nest's case the consultants are Groundwork. They boast of their "major role in helping to deliver New Deal" and of their importance "as a partner" to the government.[32] (I'm sorry, I seem to be having trouble keeping my lunch down.) When their 'Partnership Officer' Graham Bould says "The secret [at Wren's Nest] has been to earn the trust of local people"[33], I can't help but shiver.

Groundwork Black Country
Groundwork Environment Centre
Dolton Way
Tipton
W. Midlands DY4 9AL
Tel: 0121 5305500

Landlife

Landlife currently practice what they call 'creative conservation' on around 120 acres in Knowsley, also in Liverpool, St.Helens and at Glass Park near Doncaster, among other places. Principally this consists of transforming urban and industrial sites, through initial ground preparation (for example, by stripping the topsoil to reduce fertility), followed by sowing a carpet of—usually common—wildflowers, and then allowing natural processes to kick in—giving rise to unfamiliar assemblages of species. They also harvest and market the seed, through their base at the National Wildflower Centre. Their unorthodox approach to restoration, while 'devolving' wildlife out of the centralised nature reserve ghettos, prompts some tricky questions. What value do these sites have as habitats—are they little more than glorified municipal landscape gardening? Should we rethink the rigid classification of what comprises a 'habitat'? Whatever the answers, "on wildflower fields created by Landlife in Knowsley, bird species… listed as being in rapid decline… such as skylarks, lapwings and grey partridge have been commonly seen, and at least two of these species have bred successfully, close to housing areas. This has happened in a time scale of three years."[34]

Landlife
National Wildflower Centre
Court Hey Park
Liverpool L16 3NA
Tel: 0151 7371819

Abernethy

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) enormous 12,450 hectare Abernethy Reserve on Speyside in the Cairngorms protects "most of the largest remaining tract of native Caledonian pinewood"[35]—some 15% (1070 hectares) of the total. As with most of the other widely scattered pinewood fragments, overgrazing is keeping it in a poor and declining state of ecological health. The RSPB's objective is to reverse the downward spiral, recreating "a self-sustaining native pine forest over the whole potential woodland area, by leaving existing… woodland unmanaged [and]… encouraging natural regeneration of pine and associated broadleaves".[36] Ultimately this should see trees and scrub creeping back up to and beyond the natural tree line. Grazing by sheep is no longer permitted, and plantations of exotic conifers are being removed. Most of the extraneous tracks and drainage operations are now being rehabilitated, "encouraging vegetation to spread over… track surfaces by replacing soil and plant material… and blocking and infilling drainage channels to restore water tables in mires." [37] However, the RSPB don't approve of deer fencing (one of the main aids to forest recovery in Glen Affric—see above, p. 174), partly because it kills black grouse and the extremely rare capercaillie. Thus they have relied upon implementing a very heavy deer cull, which began in 1989. (For comments on this, see Glen Finglas profile, p. 176) Whatever the merits of this policy, the first signs are that the forest is starting to flourish again.

RSPB Abernethy Forest Reserve
Forest Lodge
Nethybridge
Invernesshire PH25 3EF
Tel: 01479 821409

John Muir Trust

The Trust bill themselves as "guided by Muir's charge to 'do something for wildness and make the mountains glad'", acting to "show that the damage inflicted on the wild over the centuries can be repaired".[38] They own five large estates: three inter-



locking properties in the Cuillin mountains of Skye (almost 30,000 acres), one near Cape Wrath in Sutherland (11,500 acres) and another on the rugged Knoydart peninsula (3,100 acres), sometimes referred to as the 'last wilderness in Britain'. Their Coille Srath na h-Airde project is creating over 200 acres of native woodland on Skye. On Knoydart, they are facilitating another 215 acres of woodland expansion, using both natural regeneration and planting inside three deer-fenced enclosures, with a fourth planned. They are also a member of the Knoydart Foundation, which, after a series of more than usually deranged lairds, has just triumphed in its community buy-out bid for the entire 17,500 acre estate. This is the latest in a growing trend in the Highlands, pioneered by the Isle of Eigg and the West Assynt Crofters, and opens up some very exciting possibilities. One notable feature of the Trust's work is the level of input from the local crofting communities into the management of their estates. Regrettably, the Trust have decided to retain a large hill farm as part of their Strathaird estate on Skye—presumably therefore continuing to contribute to the grazing problem in the Highlands. They run volunteer work weeks, including tree planting, footpath maintenance, litter clean-ups, seed collection for their tree nurseries, fencing and derelict fence removal, and machair grassland conservation.[39]

John Muir Trust
41 Commercial Street
Leith
Edinburgh EH6 6TY
Scotland
Tel: 0131 5540114

River Restoration Centre

Rivers are an excellent barometer of overall ecosystem health, not least because the "quality of the river environment directly influences the diversity of flora and fauna on a catchment and regional scale", and any "loss of habitat continuity [on the river] disrupts the ability of wildlife to thrive throughout the river catchment".[50] If even Scotland's "superficially healthy" rivers are in fact "severely degraded"[51], imagine the picture in the lowlands: riparian (bankside) vegetation suppressed, polluted and suffering from eutrophication (nutrient overload), regimented within flood banks and uniform courses, drunk dry by water abstraction and drastically overdeepened.

Although the picture is a gloomy one, the pivotal role of rivers in the landscape means that their restoration can unlock great potential rewards. While it can't solve all of the above problems, reconstructing a river's physical form enables the "re-establishment of in-stream and riparian physical processes… [creating] suitable ecological conditions for plant and animal communities to come back."[52]

The River Restoration Project has done just this, in pilot projects on 2 kilometre stretches of the River Cole (near Swindon on the Wilts/Oxfordshire border) and the River Skerne (Darlington, County Durham) between 1995 and 1998. At both sites, it has 'remeandered' formerly straight courses and profiled the banks, while retaining deeper backwater pools. It created wetlands on the Skerne, planted 20,000 trees and moved 20,000 cubic metres of soil, lowering the artificially raised floodplain "to allow the river to overspill its meandering banks but still protect surrounding houses".[53] The Cole was reinstated to its original buried course, a reedbed planted, the seasonal flooding regime restored, and a new hay meadow created from arable land adjoining the river. "Some scope for self-adjustment" was allowed for, giving it "the chance to form the small irregularities present in all rivers, as well as the more regular pools and riffles, vertical riverbank cliffs and gravel beaches."[54]

The project has now metamorphosed into the River Restoration Centre, a networking organisation for practitioners, researchers and others, to encourage and advise future projects—there are at least 20 underway in the Environment Agencys Thames Region alone. They are compiling a database and produce a newsletter.

The River Restoration Centre
Silsoe Campus
Silsoe
Beds MK45 4DT
Tel: 01525 863341

Community Orchards

The orchard has been evocatively described as a "halfway state between domestic gardens and the wild countryside… a physical and philosophical gateway"[40] to the fruitful space between nature and culture. "In the last 30 years the total orchard area has declined by two-thirds—around 150,000 acres have gone."[41] Simple figures disguise an accompanying loss of quality. In a testament to local inventiveness, more than 6000 varieties of cooking and eating apple are known for the UK, not to mention hundreds of cider apples, and other fruit; commercial production now concentrates on just two varieties of apples. Intensification has given us "oversprayed



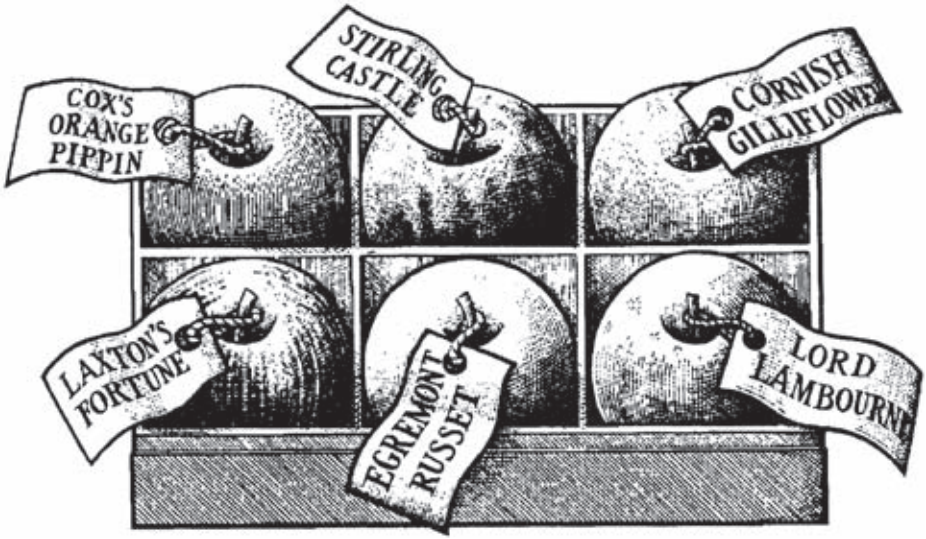
fruit factories inimical to wildlife"[42], whereas the great Victorian naturalist Richard Jefferies likened the bird life of a traditional orchard to "one of these Eastern marts where men of 50 different nationalities, and picturesquely clad, jostle each other in the bazaars: so here feathered travellers of every species have a kind of leafy capital."[43] The orchard's demise also means the loss of "knowledge of local recipes, songs, customs, wassailing, cider making… the social gatherings for work [labourers were part paid in cider!] and informal exchange of knowledge about the place and the skills of pruning, grafting and growing. The intricacy of community… is diminished."[44] Now, with the preservation of the old, the planting of new "Community Orchards" throughout the country, and Apple Day (October 21st) festivities, Common Ground are trying to revive this convivial edible landscape.

Since fruit production is not their prime purpose, they can serve as "a communal asset… the focal point for the village—the moot, the open air village hall".[45] "Freeing orchards from the simple economic imperative to create wealth can liberate their wider environmental potential and allow them to become foci for new community values".[46] As one local says of their orchard in Lustleigh, Devon, "it is not run as a commercial enterprise: it is there for the enjoyment of all"[47]—a serendipitous blend of production and play, the functional and the 'frivolous'. Apples, cherries, pears, plums, cobnuts, greengage, mulberry, damsons, medlars, gooseberries, blackcurrants and raspberries have all been planted, wildflowers sown, ponds and vineyards created—and in Lewisham, a hardy cosmopolitan mix of Loquat, Chinese Quince, Asian Pear, Olive, Japanese Pepper, Tea Plant and Cork Oak, corresponding to a multicultural community. The list of activities the orchards can play host to is as long: beekeeping, feasting, games, gifting and sharing of produce and varieties, storytelling, poetry, concerts, plays, tug of war, picnics, climbing, cider making, juice pressing, skill sharing, wood turning, establishing 'Mother Orchard' archives of local varieties, the painstaking detective work of uncovering 'lost' varieties—"Unravelling the names".[48] Lustleigh again: "If we cannot find the original names for these trees, we will rename them ourselves".[49]

Common Ground
PO Box 25309
London NW5 1ZA

RSPB Reedbed Creation

Reedbed is a very restricted habitat, even rarer than the Caledonian pinewood. A 1993 survey of the UK found only 6,500 hectares dispersed across 922 sites—with only 56 of these larger than 20 hectares. Only the bigger sites are really capable of accommodating all the habitat niches necessary for the characteristic reedbed species: birds like the bittern, marsh harrier, bearded tit, reed warbler and water rail, and





also unusual plants, moths and butterflies, otters and water voles. Being highly dynamic, reedbeds are a classic example of a 'plagioclimatic' habitat: like other favoured conservation landscapes, they are arrested at an early stage of natural succession by management, which prevents them from drying out and developing into woodland. But they can also emerge spontaneously and cover a large area when drainage lapses, as happened at Leighton Moss (Lancashire) and Minsmere (Suffolk).

Bitterns are exceptionally rare and elusive creatures, with only 20 'booming' males recorded nationwide, requiring large, wet reedswamps for courtship and breeding. As part of the new 'biodiversity target' of '100 territorial bitterns by 2020' ('boom or bust'!), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds are creating over 400 hectares of new reedbed (Bittern Barratt homes), including: 160 hectares (ha) on ex-arable land at Lakenheath Fen (Suffolk), 54 ha on old peat workings at Ham Wall (Somerset), 100 ha at Malltraeth Marsh (Anglesey) and 20 ha at Mersehead Farm (Dumfries and Galloway). Various techniques are utilised to create " 'nodes' of wetland vegetation, from which natural encroachment can take place, and so fill the gaps." [55] Extensive landforming works are also required, including excavation of pools and ditches, and at Mersehead "the channelised river has been diverted back to its original meandering course across the floodplain".[55]

However, as with Gwen Finch and the Fenland project, (see above, p. 176 and 174) we run up against the perils of working within the (drainage) system. The RSPB's preferred approach is to "simulate natural hydrological dynamics"[55], but this has proved impossible—at Lakenheath for instance, it "would have needed wholesale removal and reconstruction of existing flood banks for the whole Internal Drainage District"[56] (no bad thing, some might say.) Because "virtually all the lower reaches of river and coastal floodplains in Britain are… extensively drained, new wetlands need to be isolated from surrounding areas"[56]—even going to the absurd lengths, at Wicken and Woodwalton Fens, of insulating reserve boundaries "with clay or butyl rubber" linings[57]—'for their own protection'. ('Boil in the bag' wetlands?) In the name of resurrecting untrammelled natural flows, the RSPB must reinforce the compartmentalisation of the landscape, by constructing its own flood banks, greatly manipulating water levels, etc. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em—management begets management.

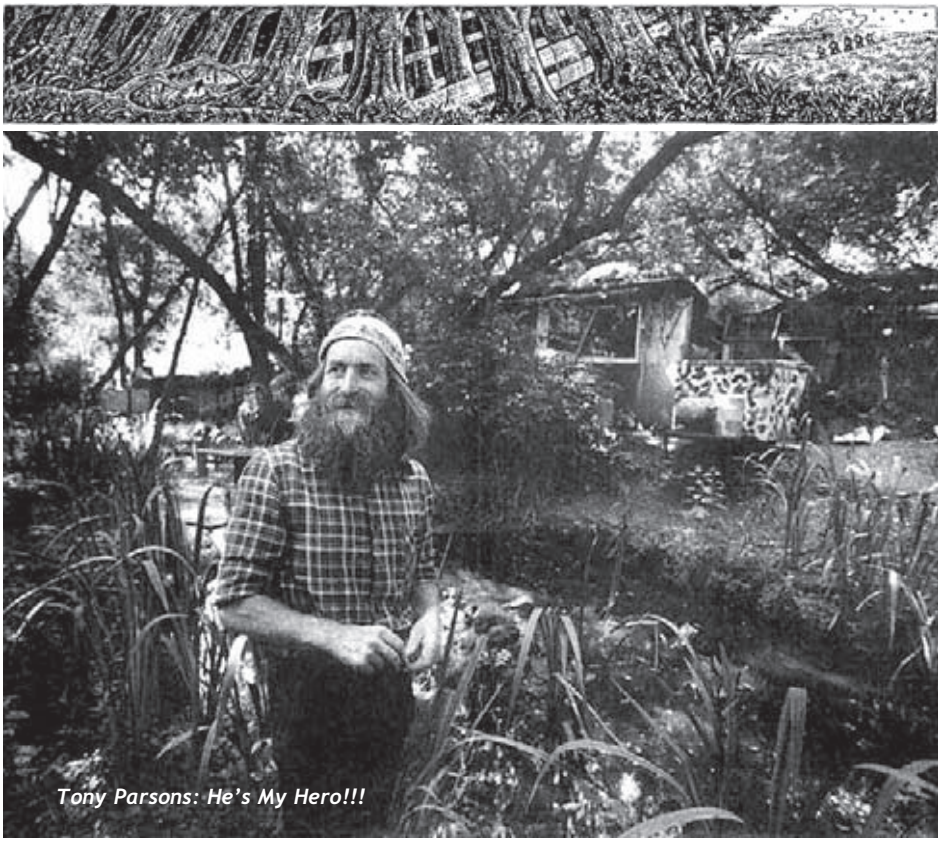
As with ground flora in new woodlands (see Pound Farm profile, p. 177), "it is not clear exactly how long a new wetland may take to develop a full complement of bird, mammal, amphibian, fish, invertebrate and plant species. The reed cover may develop relatively quickly, perhaps within 5 years, but colonisation by other species may take considerably longer".[58] I have a vision of conservationists sitting twiddling their thumbs, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the guests at their carefully laid-out habitat-party.[59]

RSPB
The Lodge
Sandy
Bedfordshire SG19 2DL

Brilliant Bloke in a Barrel

The following story expresses some of the best, most salient themes of ecological restoration. As Barry Lopez says, "I know of no restorative of heart, body and soul more effective against hopelessness than the restoration of the Earth".[64] The word 'ecology' comes from the Greek 'oikos' ('home'). You can become reconciled with the world by restoring 'home', determining and making your own space, drawing sustenance from it, and welcoming other creatures into it—a bit like a bower bird perhaps. What is refreshing about Mr. Parsons is that he acted unilaterally—he didn't devise a complex strategy or go cap in hand for magnanimous "permission". Unassuming, he just got on and did it, because it was something he needed to do.

Former engineer and plant-hire manager Tony Parsons returned home to Cullompton, Devon in 1990, after years of wandering Europe. Here, on a railway embankment, he set about carving out 'Parson's Kingdom'. He slept in a barrel in a shack built from scrap materials, and put up a wind generator with car batteries to power his radio, tape recorder and lighting. He also "cleared an acre of swamp of generations of farmers' junk, creating ponds, flower glades, and a sanctuary for birds and animals". He explains that "I had a lot of psychiatric treatment in hospital, on drugs for six months with silly nurses making me sit down. Society aggravates me and I got away from all that here. I don't take medication at all now… I'm totally self-sufficient here and harming no one… Here there's no aggravation. When you go a bit wobbly with the mental health you can go in the barrel for two days, shut the door and stay there. When I come out I feel a damned sight better."



Tony Parsons: He's My Hero!!!

But of course it couldn't last. In 1993 his shack was valued at up to £120,000 under the council tax, and British Rail, at the behest of the local authority, proposed to evict him for living without planning permission. This was accompanied by the usual chorus of hand-wringing, depersonalised 'regrets'—British Rail talking of "this legal nonsense", and Parson's spineless local councillor saying "I personally wouldn't want to see the poor guy removed", but that "New Age travellers might be encouraged to park where they please if [he] is not made an example of."[65]

Within a couple of weeks, a reader of the newspaper that reported on Parson's plight had offered to buy the land for him—but by then he had already fled, his reign having been brought to an end.

The same old story is repeated in many different places. In "Transitory Gardens, Uprooted Lives", Diana Balmori and Margaret Morton show "how the homeless and dispossessed of New York use odd scraps of greenery and discarded junk to create small enclaves of peace and beauty amid the city's trash dumps and vacant lots, knowing that cops or bulldozers will soon move in to flatten their Arcadias." [666]

Barn Elms, London

The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust are engaged in what has been called "the most exciting and complex habitat creation project in Europe"[67] on the disused 150 acre Barn Elm reservoir site in London. Highly sophisticated land-forming and regulation of water levels over 70 acres is creating a mosaic of wetland habitats: lakes and lagoons, reedbed and carr, grazing marsh, mudflats, and islands, "topped with different substrates to provide the preferred habitat for a wide range of birds".[68] (You want terns with that?) A network of new ponds attracts dragonflies and amphibians, as well as the already high population of Pipistrelle bats. 250,000 aquatic plants and 27,000 trees have been planted, with half the area left to natural colonisation.

However, the project is celebrated as an example of "conservation and commercial interests work[ing] in harmony"[69], proof that "Business enables wildlife to flourish".[70] As with the work at Greenham Common, (see above, p. 178) the project was contingent upon initial funding of £11 million from "a prestigious housing development"[71] on 25 acres of the site,



which has been a Site of Special Scientific Interest since 1974. (We must fowl the mudflats where the wealthy live!) Like cynical 'planning gain', here the concept of "an enabling development—a rarely used principle of UK… planning law"[72] helped to put it on a fast track through the planning system.

The project also features a Discovery Centre, intended to "enthuse visitors about wetland conservation"[72] through state of the art interpretive facilities like touch-screen computers and multi-media presentations. It is slightly reminiscent of Groundwork's gratuitous, cargo cult-like "Green IT" programme—reconnecting children with the real world via the (ultimately sterile and controllable) virtual one. "Fibre-optic cabling has been laid throughout the site"[70], (digitised ducks are go!), conveying images of "birds roosting, feeding and nesting in the wilder parts"[73] back to monitors in the Centre via CCTV. The birds must perform and not disappoint—'seen and not bird'[74].

Commenting on this 'disneyfication' of the natural, Chris Clarke contrasts the "gradual appreciation of the wonderful, elusive subtlety of nature" with the induced experience of "nature that has been strapped to the procrustean bed of industrial time." He asks: "What happens when people accustomed to this industrial nature are faced with a natural environment in unenhanced form? Where… the animals mostly hide or run away before you can see them? By comparison to nature in its disneyfied state, the simple swamp will seem a flaccid lifeless thing, its resident wildlife uninteresting and devoid of musical accompaniment".[75] Accentuating the theme park feel (admission is charged), "from the Arctic to the Tropics, fourteen different ['branded'?] wetland habitats have been created in Wetlands of the World".[71]

The punters are also exhorted to use public transport, dutifully "playing their part as 'green consumers' [consuming 'green' birds?] in the new millennium."[69]

Once you strip away all the bullshit, a worthwhile core remains—it is a staggering practical achievement, an undeniable improvement, and it's uplifting to know that lapwing and ringed plovers are now breeding again, only 4 miles from central London. On the other hand, is this the future, "show[ing] what sustainability is all about":[76] wildlife privatised, sponsored by business in 'innovative partnership', and instantly reproduced in widescreen format?[77]

Volunteer opportunities are available. (Don't let me put you off—check it out for yourself.)

The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust
The Wetland Centre
Barn Elms Lodge
Queen Elizabeth Walk
Barnes, London SW13 0DB
Tel: 0181 8768995

Orkney Native Trees

The woods of Orkney have been in retreat for around 5000 years, probably as a result both of climate change and human activities such as burning and stock grazing. Today the islands are almost treeless and exposed to salt spray, with only one tiny tract of true relict woodland surviving: Berriedale on the island of Hoy, the most northerly natural woodland in the British Isles. Its only companions are scattered trees and small groups in steep gullies and ravines, areas of low willow carr, and aspen clinging to the cliffs overlooking Scapa Flow. Berriedale, although no more than a couple of hectares in size, is still a "remarkable and atmospheric woodland"[60], with birch, hazel, aspen, rowan and willow, and "a dense understorey of Roses and Honeysuckle and a ground flora of tall herbs and ferns".[60] Ungrazed since 1984 when it was acquired by the RSPB, natural regeneration is now beginning to take place—albeit at a slow pace because of Orkney's very short growing season. Since a single fire could easily wipe out the entire wood, seed is being collected and planted out in enclosures and gullies elsewhere on the reserve.

The Orkney Islands Native Tree Restoration Project is overseeing the creation of new small woodlands on "up to 50 sites"[61], totalling at least 20 hectares. Along with the work of the new Orkney Native Plant Network in propagating trees, shrubs and wildflowers, these new woods, sheltering along the line of a burn or in the lee of a hill, should become seed sources themselves in turn—thereby safeguarding the unique genetic material of the Orkney woods. Beyond this, "it is very likely that the stimulation of local interest and the increasing availability of native plants will lead to the ongoing planting of many other sites… well into the 21st century".[62] Volunteer opportunities are available at Berriedale and with the Restoration Project.[63]

Orkney Islands Native Tree Restoration Project
Jenny Taylor
3 Manse Lane
Stromness
Orkney KW16 3BX
Tel: 01856 851322



James Plowman
RSPB
Ley House
Hoy
Orkney KW16 3NJ
Tel: 01856 791298

Shetland Community Woodlands
Alan Blane
Shetland Amenity Trust
22-24 North Road
Lerwick
Shetland ZE1 0NQ
Tel: 01595 694688
(Similar to the Orkney Project, but in an even more hostile setting.)

The Isle of Rum

The Scottish Isle of Rum, whose Gaelic name means "Kingdom of the Wild Forest" is a National Nature Reserve of 26,400 acres wholly owned by Scottish Natural Heritage. Its history is the familiar story of the Highlands, re-enacted in microcosm. Since acquisition as a reserve in 1957, its treatment has been guided by a desire to "carefully resuscitate habitats and entire communities and let them show us how they choose to function".[78] The vision is of "a wild land set apart and the aim is to transform a man-made desert"[79] into an island "lush in native wild plants and animals in a continuous natural progression from the shallow sea, over the machair and grasslands of the shore, up through the wild woods covering the slopes, up into the mountain scrub and up onto the open mountain tops."[80] Since 1958 over a million trees have been planted in two large deer-fenced enclosures (approximately 1600 and 1800 acres in size) on the north and south sides of Kinloch, Loch Scresort—as well as in a further 9 small trial plots around the island. Because soils in some parts have become "so poor that trees could not regenerate naturally",[81] nitrogen-fixing species like whin, broom, and alder have been utilised, and "artificial fertilisation of every tree planted with… rock phosphate is standard".[82]

The earliest trees are now 50 feet high, woodland birds are recolonising in large numbers, and there are currently moves to recreate "the ground flora from now very restricted native Rum woodland plants".[83] Sheep grazing and 'muirburn' have been stopped, and Scottish Natural Heritage are instituting a substantial deer cull. (See Glen Finglas Profile for comments on this, p. 176)

Spurred on by the highly successful reintroduction of the white-tailed sea eagle (exterminated by 1912, 82 released on Rum 1975-1985), they are looking into the reintroduction of other plants and animals, "to speed up the recovery process and replace those that have been lost".[84] The soil restoration and other work has also helped to "illustrate how the carrying capacity of the West Highlands and Islands can be improved".[85] Finally, in a region still smarting from the bitter blows of the Highland Clearances, they wish to advance Rum as a "vibrant, self-reliant community within the comity of the Small Isles"[86], but "without compromising the island's environment". [84]

Visitors and volunteers are welcome.
Scottish Natural Heritage
Rum National Nature Reserve
The White House
Isle of Rum PH43 4RR
Tel: 01687 462026

Pulborough Brooks, West Sussex

The 171 hectare swathe of flood meadows at Pulborough Brooks suffered horribly in the 1960s. In common with many other such areas, the canalisation of the local River Arun and the improved drainage works that went with it enabled rapid agricultural intensification on a site that had been lightly managed for centuries. "The dry conditions and applications of fertiliser and herbicide virtually eliminated the characteristic wet grassland fauna and flora".[87] It was all for nothing—the arable land swiftly fell derelict as "nothing could improve the soil beyond poor quality agricultural land".[88] The RSPB purchased the site in 1989, and reinstated summer grazing and hay cutting, reprofiled banks of the grazing marsh ditches, and created both permanent and temporary shallow pools. The fields were "reseeded with a mix as close as… [they] could get to the surviving patches of original grass under hedges".[88] Around 80 hectares of the floodplain are inundated every winter—and these silvery sheets of water thronging with cacophonous legions of birds are an awe-inspiring sight. The result for both flora and fauna is a dramatic turnaround in their fortunes. The numbers of breeding and wintering waders and wildfowl have rocketed. "The nice thing is being able to bring people here and prove to them that you can restore diversity, not in a lifetime but in less than a decade", says Tim Callaway, site manager.[89] (Similar work has been carried out on the internationally important Nene Washes reserve in Cambridgeshire, which in the late 1970s was 75% intensively



cropped.) As with most RSPB reserves, there are opportunities to visit or volunteer.[90]

RSPB
Upperton's Barn Visitor Centre
Wiggonholt
Pulborough
W. Sussex RH20 2EL
Tel: 01798 874042

Those hard-rockin' Lomeshaye Villagers

Situated on the floodplain of the River Calder near Nelson in Lancashire, Lomeshaye was designed as a Robert Owen-style model village in the early 17th century by 'enlightened' industrialist Richard Ecroyd, to house the workforce for his new mill. In the 1980s, the river was recklessly diverted and a vast industrial estate built on the floodplain just a hundred yards from Ecroyd's cottages. The heavy flooding that came as a result of the development in the winter of 1991/2 united the villagers against it: "[After the floods] I spoke to people that I didn't speak to before, but we're all in the same mind—we've just had enough here—they're spoiling our village and we must do something about it." They negotiated better flood defences, but two years later, adding insult to injury, came a proposal to demolish the mill's old weaving shed and build a 24-hour industrial car park in its place. After they defeated this, they carried on the momentum by forming the Lomeshaye Villagers' Group, with the novel idea of giving themselves some control over their own surroundings for a change. They created their own 'Loamy Wood' nature reserve on the site of the old river course, "to try and provide some screening from the metallic vista that we now had in front of us." They planted a traditional hedgerow and 250 trees, and built footpaths and dry stone walls, all of which meant learning new skills. The centrepiece was a pond to replace the marshes infilled by the estate, including every wetland plant historically recorded in Lancashire, and a dipping platform and boardwalk for the children from the local nursery. The reserve was complete and "looking idyllic", when along came another proposal: for a permanent flood alleviation scheme (which they needed), but with the typical sting in the tail of a road, car park and loading bay straight through the middle of the reserve, threatening everything they had created. But they have now defeated this too, and their final project is for a much larger pond on top of a flood barrier, with some very large reedbeds, purely for wildlife. One villager says of the reserve that "I feel peaceful, and I feel as though I'm Queen of the Earth when I sit up there." Another says that "We're certainly not environmentalists, but we are people who believe that we could empower ourselves and make very, very positive changes. Basically believing in each other and yourselves, that you can achieve something, you don't need to rely on others to achieve anything."[91] Nuff said.

Lomeshaye Villagers Group
c/o Andrew Clifford
29 Ecroyd Street
Lomeshaye Village
Pendle BB9 7BJ
Tel: 01282 692647

OTHER CONTACTS

Emma Loat
Council for National Parks
246 Lavender Hill
London SW1 1LJ
Tel: 0171 9244077

In 1997 the CNP published the groundbreaking report "Wild by Design in the National Parks of England and Wales". They hope to follow its recommendations through in 1999 by setting up a 'Wilder Areas Action Group'.

Habitat Restoration Project
English Nature (boo hiss)
Northminster House
Peterborough PE1 1UA
Tel: 01733 455101

For the "Habitat Restoration Project: Factsheets and Bibliographies", Rob Dryden, English Nature Research Report 260 (1997), and other literature. Overly managerial, but a helpful starting point. Don't forget to let them know that they are the Neighbour of the Beast.

Movement for Compassionate Living
47 Highlands Road
Leatherhead
Surrey KT22 8NQ

Wonderful vegan organisation extolling the virtues of a tree-based culture and world-wide reforestation, as opposed to the "second population explosion" of livestock. Produce "Abundant Living in the Coming Age of the Tree", "Growing our Own" and lots of other pamphlets.

Reforesting Scotland
21A Coates Crescent
Edinburgh EH3 7AF
Tel: 0131 2262496

Not really engaged in hands-on restoration work, but they know a few people who are! A catalyst for a growing movement, at the forefront of agitating for ecological and social regeneration in Scotland since 1989. Produce an inspiring magazine of the same name.

Society for Ecological Restoration
The White House
129 Andover Road
Winchester SO22 6AY
Tel: 01962 884400

A useful networking point for information on ecological restoration in the UK and abroad. Organising a major conference for 2000 to promote concepts and practice of restoration.





The only half-decent thing to come out of the horrific M3 extension through Twyford Down was the ripping up, re-contouring and grassing over of the old A33 Winchester bypass. It gave the people of Winchester easy access across the flood meadows of the River Itchen to St. Catherine's Hill for the first time in decades. A mere 5 years after the work was done, however, and the local council already wants to re-tarmac 20 acres of the site as a park-and-ride facility. There is strong local opposition to being robbed of their precious green space once more.

Footnotes

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Storming the Palace
Park Life in South London



Rising from flat suburban S. London and crowned with a huge 160ft television transmission tower, Crystal Palace Park boasts the tallest hill in the capital's south. In one of London's more surreal green spaces ornamental gardens, a football stadium, and geese covered lakes mix with grand stone staircases that go nowhere and 30ft hollow 19th Century metal dinosaurs.

This was the second site of the great exhibition in the last century, a celebratory extravaganza glorifying the power of the British Empire and its global reach. The vast glass palace which had held displays and artifacts from every corner of the world burnt down in the 1930s, ironically just as the Empire was beginning to face a re-emerging opposition in the Third World. All that remains now are piles of rubble, the odd column and the dinosaurs. Nineteenth century scientists misunderstood the bones they discovered so the monsters are hopelessly mis-shapen. Used in the Second World War as bomb shelters their main function now seems to be to create a bizarre backdrop for local kids to take drugs by moonlight. Already well established as a place of drama and weirdness, Crystal Palace seemed ideally suited for the direct action to come.

For three years locals had fought the local Councils plan to build a multiplex cinema but their legal campaign had got them nowhere. The multiplex will destroy the highest part of the park including the now wooded and wilded Palace foundation site. Following hot on the heels of the defence and eviction of a tree site in Kingston Park (p. 148), it was almost by natural selection that the action site at Crystal Palace was established. So just after midnight on April Fools Day '98 a crew of eighteen people (and two dogs) quietly reclaimed the site of the Palace.

The Rise of 'Crystal Pallets'

By dawn we had tents, nets and squatting notices up, quickly followed by the first visit from the enemy who were politely told they were trespassing and could they fuck off and knock next time. It wasn't long before the media circus arrived, fresh, alert and looking for Swampy. From day one the press and TV crews were invasive, seeking to dominate and exploit us while remaining aloof about their aims. With a degree of wisdom gained from our experiences maybe we can learn to control the media feed-



ing frenzy by simply issuing statements whilst hand picking selective interviews.

Support from the local residents came quickly. For about three years their protest had failed, suddenly there was a new focus for their energies. People from all around this ancient hill top site arrived with food, clothes, shelter, tools, and mountains of pallets. If you haven't been to a direct action site you won't understand the sheer possibilities that lie in pallets. Nearly every structure, every treehouse, barricade and bender is made from them. The site was thus nicknamed 'Crystal Pallets'.

Being a Sports Council site, no lottery cash could be thrown at the Palace, so the Tory council cooked up the old recipe of 'regeneration'. Alarm bells woke up a dedicated band of local residents, who having exhausted their 'democratic' rights, accepted what they knew in their hearts was the only course of action left-the direct one.

Within six weeks a comfortable, if toxic, home for dozens was built. Toxic because after the Palace had burned down, the site was used to dump blitz rubble, resulting in an unusual concentration of lead in the soil. To add to this, the council had allowed flytipping including lots of asbestos! Anyway, back to the story. The support, both moral and material, continued to flood in. Surveys showing 85% local opposition to the development were the norm, and thousands were adding their names to petitions. Therefore it was no surprise to learn that Bromley Council were obstinately digging their heels in. They wanted these 'filthy illegal squatters' orf their land or...erm, they'd evict (surprise). Full moons came and went and with them, new direction, new impetus.

Mid-Summer Madness

Over the summer swathes of the Palace posse travelled, marched and danced to various parties/protests. The tour started from home on Beltane (May 1st), where spaced out goats played with the animals resident and visiting. Come the G8 Global street party on May 16th we put on our gladrags, tarted it up to the hilt and 'ad it with them in Birmingham. The atmosphere in and around the sound system was fucking wild, fucking wicked, yet anyone near the upturned car won't need reminding of the eerie intense few seconds as some lunatic attempted to set it on fire. A word of advice: Get the car near the pigs, not your family before you light the blue touch paper and retire. All day and night Birmingham had a electric air, resonant with the vibration of creative unified resistance.

With summer came the usual problems on site. Consumption of drugs increased and a mainly lunched out recycling program led to communal areas being spaces to avoid. In amongst the rats, flies, filth and beer cans, alcoholics flourish. Fighting authority takes sobriety.

Other things flowering and fruiting that summer were our fruit, veg, herbs and flowers. Attempting to work with a permaculture ethic, we harvested beans, tomatoes, courggettes, potatoes, nasturtiums, onions, blackberries and more I forgot. Establishing productive gardens can be as important as climbing up trees. Not everyone can live in trees but we can all look after plants. Rediscovering old skills for a brighter future.

Whilst the festivities all around were going on security was breached at the Palace three times or more. Firstly by the Police Forward Intellegience Team (FIT) who took the piss by storming onto site and filming this and demanding that. More vigilance was needed if the community was to keep the state off and be a true temporary autonomous zone.

Coupled with an influx of Babylon's waifs and strays who took advantage of the welcoming atmosphere, site life took on a more strenuous and stressful atmosphere. During July thefts from site were happening, and regularly. Tools, money, even Tasmanian passports were going missing from under our noses. We have but ourselves to blame for not being a tight-knit crew.



According to the multiplex's architecht Ian Ritchie,
'Building is an act of economic and cultural virility'



These lapses, with ensuing witch hunts fuelled by paranoia, combined with the constant bombardment of microwaves from the TV mast meant focus and momentum was lost, and the days were noticeably getting shorter... and all the while Bromley Council were shuffling and squirming, issuing writs and threats. The camp decided to take the fight to them (you gotta raise the stakes). Having ignored three years of protest and the voices of all who lived there we decided a big fuck off party might change the perspective slightly.

The full moon on August 8th 1998 saw sound systems, over 500 people and as much stimulation as a person can shove up their nose hit the top ridge adjacent to the site.

The sun rose to a fantastic vibe, new friends, and a spotlessly clean aftermath heralded what was to be a noise-filled early Autumn. There was a 'village fair' which it must be said we lunched out, punk nights, more sound systems interwoven with regular candlelit vigils.

We knew as we entered into September the game had taken a new twist. The legal challenge by the liberal Crystal Palace Campaign was faltering- and badly. No surprise there (see *Never Trust the Middle Classes* box). The pagan festival of Samhain approached and the merry big band from Palace started to look inwards with thoughts of evictions.

Defenses that looked all Summer like they would remain fantasies took shape as we poured tonne after tonne of concrete on to madly unstable land.

The earth we walked for nearly a year was as it turned out perfect ground for our engineers of sketchy construction. As holes appeared and got deeper (digging spurred on by rumours of existing tunnel networks), from the surface rose Faulty Towers of scaffolding.

With more spikes than a punx picnic, more wired than any amphetamin assassin, the original damaged leaning tower of piss 'eds increasingly dominated the landscape. Come eviction it was over forty foot high and well over 400 cans of Strongbow Super old. Memories of it still fresh bring smiles to faces.

With winter fast approaching, the debris on site both animate and inanimate was piling up. For some it was time to move off site and recuperate, for those living on site the need to party was never far away.

What do you do when the local redneck pub just up the road gets boarded up? Get sound systems and your mates and rock it that's what. A posse quickly reclaimed it (obviously feeling very at home there), and caused the Council yet more headaches.



The long arm of the law plucks a defender out of his tree.

During those dark, dark nights around Winter Solstice actions were planned and carried out against the partnerships who wanted to develop the top ridge. Hitting multinationals is easy—they are everywhere, but faceless property developers like London and Regional Properties are more tricky. Owned by a Dutch company and based in an off-shore Guernsey bank account, these bastard wide boys were almost unreachable, suffice to say we knew where the directors lived.

Eviction Paranoia & Eviction Reality

With Yule came the first major eviction paranoia.The fear was based around unfinished defenses, oh, and the small matter of Bromley being granted an order to evict, at their leisure, with pleasure. We got our minds on the job in hand. Amazing dedication to the cause saw towers appear in all directions and as we entered the final year of the millennium rumours and counter-rumours did the rounds. Again!!

It seemed, paranoia aside, that it was possible and plausible that the Forces of Darkness would strike quickly after the New Year. With this in mind local residents dug deep for the umpteenth time to supply the crew with brew, and vegans with... whatever those funny people eat and drink.

It came to pass that definitely, for certain, 100% they were coming in on the 4th of January. Warnings were issued countrywide and a posse of around 70 people climbed up trees, went down tunnels or locked on and a vigil of around 40 locals anxiously waited from 6am to welcome the state.

Meanwhile at the Epsom site (see articles end) around 300 police with double that number of security laid siege to the Silver Birches. They met fierce



resistance from the sole occupier who moaned about being woken up. Game Over Epsom. Sigh of relief for Palace.

Gypsies paid us £20 per load so that they could dump tires on our site—which we used for defenses. Business flourished as did the barricades—shame about the wildlife. More Swampification by the corporate media, intent on highlighting tedious trivialities. When will we learn?

Storm clouds gathered over the hilltop as the daylight hours grew longer. Many nights and days were spent in various states of mind watching the natural light shows. We had it all there, from temperatures above 100f to downpours, lightning and double rainbows. Ain't nature wonderful?

After Imbok (yet another pagan date for your diary), the eviction wind up got into gear with the barricading and trial runs happening at the 121 Squat centre just down the road in Brixton (see p. 132). Judging by appearances in February, many on site were starting to wish the eviction on themselves and who can blame them?

At the full moon on the third of March the state moved in to restore their order and repossess this most toxic of squats. People and defenses were readyish for the battle to commence. All through the night before people rushed about sorting out where the last minute drinks were being had. With dawn, there was the arrival of various substances and again lots of media. Whose fuckin' eviction is this anyway!?

Up in the Faulty Tower our vantage point wasn't-great. Bloody trees were obscuring all the action but it was good enough to see over 350 cops storm in quickly, most in riot gear. Within ten minutes or so a lot of ground support was gone, people failing to get into lock-on positions in the chaos.

The massive operation brought all traffic to a grinding halt. Pensioners and school kids were unwittingly caught up in a military manoeuvre. A half hour into the eviction and the scale of it all was vividly apparent. Fearing a take over of the TV mast masses of pigs had gathered around it getting microwaved to fuck. I mean as if we would...

Fencing contractors ordered by Bromley to break the law duly obliged, fencing off a right of way, flouting the instructions of two High Court judges. Come nightfall that first day, one could only imagine what everyone else was feeling. Underground, up trees, locked on in holes or on your own up a 25 foot tower that had no shelter, no bedding and no food. Dedication to duty does not sum up feelings of admiration for the women and men, girls and boys, who time and time again put their arses on the line. Altruistic beautiful people every single one of 'em.

Evictions are to be enjoyed (if possible) and frankly we were having a giggle constantly baiting baby-faced coppers who couldn't resist stroking saplings. By day two of the eviction twice as many security had either been arrested for shoplifting, stealing videos or for fighting as had been arrested on our side.

Most of the trees were cut down before nightfall and as we curled up that night, our thoughts were on our brothers and sitters in much more perilous positions than us. Up on the Faulty Tower we went to sleep knowing they were coming to get us—and soon. One of our lot, freezing cold and starving and without brew for two days was still refusing to get off what was a hugely significant strategic tower on top of a bunker. Babylon was duly unimpressed.

Things were getting very surreal. Police were giving us Mexican waves at sunrise. On day three they asked us to sing Happy Birthday to one of their



Power to the People's Towers!

Right: During the eviction the Faulty Tower stood firm for two days. Building towers can be a very effective defence tactic in fighting developments. Left: In 1975 as part of the vast resistance to the building of the Toyko Airport at Narita, Japanese peasants built two 62 metre high towers. Standing at the end of the first runway the towers prevented the take off or landing of any planes. Tens of thousands defended the towers, masked up, wearing helmets and wielding pikes. '*Surrounded by fields, gleaming emerald that day in the rain, the tower exuded strength. It's steel girders, meshing and intermeshing like the joined arms of it's defenders. As if the secret forces of the earth had come together to replenish the struggle of those pledged to defend it, against those who would spread the pall of death*.'-from *Libero No.3* (Japanese Anarchist mag) 1976





mates."Is that before you smash our skulls in and spray CS gas in our eyes - or after?" We didn't bother.

After deliberating for some time they took out the tower quite swiftly. About five hours elapsed before it was finally cleared. This turned into a blessing for it enabled us up there to be re-united with the posse on the terraces just in time for us to witness a pissed chief druid/biker who thinks he's King Arthur wobble then fall backwards tumbling down the bank. Monarchy—HA!

Typical post-eviction celebrations ensued, fully in the knowledge that three of our mates were still underground. Drinks were drunk for them, repeatedly! Unless having worked and lived underground it is difficult to comprehend the changes in your awareness. Days turned to weeks. On the eighth our Lancashire comrade emerged from his bunker after a butane bottle leaked underground.

Words aplenty have been spoken about the two naughty kids staying underground in their ten by six ft bunker for 19 days. By staying down they massively increased the cost of the eviction. They refused to speak either to the media, police or tunnel teams (see box to the right). This admirable show of no compromise, either with the state or spectacle should be found at evictions more often. Many of us could do a lot worse than following their good example.

The last bunker dwellers were taken off site nearly three weeks after the eviction had started, making Crystal Palace the longest eviction in British history. However, the fight wasn't over, for a few faced prison on unrelated charges, one of whom after spending 19 days underground was banged up for a month using a 25 year old anti-union law. It just shows the extent of Babylon's annoyance. I'm sure the £2 million eviction bill must have upset them a bit. Still, they bleeding started it.

So the complex Bromley have about the complex they want has not vanished. As we go to press Babylon is tied up in red tape of its own making. Many of us went back to our homes outside South London while other Palaceites have remained, living as a community squatting in Streatham. Whether still in the area or not we all valued the time and experiences our great Mother produced there. As did loads of residents who changed and adapted to the new climate (of resistance).

The zeitgeist seems to force more and more into taking action, and with each week new people join the hoards.

Two Statements From The Bunker

1) For years politicians have been selling our future to multinational companies. Ordinary people are constantly excluded from decisions about their own environment. The only way for us to resist this is by direct action. Every day we remain, we cost them money, which makes the scheme less viable.

As anarchists we hope that by resisting this development, we will not only protect this historic site, but will move one step closer to a future in which neither politicians, nor business, but people themselves control every aspect of their own lives.

2) Contrary to some opinions, our action was not a media stunt but direct action. Our aim was to protect the site and hinder those who seek to profit from it's destruction.

As anarchists we understand direct action to be the only way people are empowered, and real change achieved.There is no spectacle that the capitalist media could create that would do justice to the reality of the campaign, or the community that has grown from it. The collective action of this community is more important than any personality or individual efforts.As capitalist media cannot be expected to fairly represent any action that undermines the capitalist system, we will not be saying any more.

A Surreal Day In Epsom

It was the first working day of 1999. The headquarters of Shell had been occupied (see page 125) and the London Underground offices had been invaded in solidarity with tube strikers. At the same time around 70 of us had responded to an eviction scare at the Crystal Palace action camp.

Although the eviction alert turned out to be false alarm, we soon found out that whilst we had been waiting for the bailiffs to arrive the eviction at the Epsom anti-road/car park camp elsewhere in South London had begun. Energy and enthusiasm at the Crystal Palace camp was low and many people were reluctant to leave the site. However one vehicle left immediately hoping that security at Epsom would still be minimal and that they'd be able to get on site. Later, I jumped into a car with a few others. During the journey we received a call from the first van who warned us of the scale of the police presence and that the only person to have been at the camp when the eviction began had already been arrested and taken to court. We decided to continue but to go straight to



the court to support the person who had been arrested. Arriving at one of the police road blocks stopping all 'suspicious' looking vehicles going into the town, we quickly became aware of the size of the police operation. After a brief delay we drove to the court building. It was from this point on that the day became increasingly bizzare.

The camp at Epsom was small with very few people living there and serious resistance to the eviction was unlikely. Despite this being obvious to the local police, whose headquarters were located directly opposite the camp, the scale of the security measures taken was phenomenal. Several hundred police and security surrounded the site whilst baillifs and climbers cleared the trees and structures that had been built by those resisting the development. Their operation, however, stretched much further than the boundaries of the camp.

Shortly after being refused entry to the court building by five cops, an unmarked white van drew up, the side door opened and several members of the Metropolitan Police FIT team jumped out. They approached us immediately, addressing the person I was with by her first name. Slightly shocked our natural response was to get up and leg it. As we turned the first corner I noticed a person not in police uniform speak into their coat. He also began to chase us along with the two cops from FIT. They were all fairly unfit, so we managed to lose them quite easily. After hiding for a while behind a public toilet we ventured back out onto the High Street. There were cops on almost every street corner. We began walking back to the Court where, along with the person who'd been arrested, we bumped in to a few other's who had been involved in the campaign.

Keen to find somewhere to get tea and chill out we left the court together. A van full of police in black boiler suits followed us slowly as a group of police photographers took pictures whilst some members of FIT attempted to strike up conversations. Keen not to lead a police convoy to the house of the friendly person who had offered us a room to relax we split up. A couple of people went back to the car we had arrived in, only to be followed by a police van, whilst others of us went into tourist shops to avoid the photographers. Undeterred FIT continued their harassment. Each of us was being tailed by two or three cops, one of whom had either a stills or video camera. Trying to minimise the number of pictures they could get of us we tried to use paper bags from a gift shop as make-shift masks.

It was clear that the cops following us were under instructions not to let us go anywhere without keeping us under observation. Perhaps the local police were expecting either a much larger response to the eviction alert, or for the few people who turned up at the site to attempt to re-occupy the camp or damage the machinery being used to clear the trees. Unfortunately there was no possibility of our being able to achieve either of these things. We called the person driving the car we had arrived in, arranged a meeting point and travelled back to Crystal Palace—followed, of course, by a van full of cops and several members of the FIT team. A truly bizzare day!

Never Trust the Middle Classes

"The treehouses are built, the tunnels dug and the small community is already on eviction alert. A world away, in the rarefied atmosphere of QC Anthony Scrivener's Gray's Inn chambers, barrister and Bromley resident Philip Kolvin [far right!] is leading his campaign of 'professional resistance' against the council." (from the Trade magazine *Estates Gazette*, 20th February 1999.)

Kolvin's Campaign (nicknamed Babylon's Protest) purposefully set itself apart from the site, groups and locals involved in direct action, while simultaneously reaping the financial reward of the televised resistance. Mistakenly thinking they were giving money to the site many donated to the 'campaign' which instead went on countless fruitless legal manouvres. Money flooded in to the campaign coffers (£30,000+) while those on site often went without food or basic action supplies—relying often on what they could skip and steal.



Street Parties and Sausages
News from Germany

Hüttendorf-frolics

The anti-A33 Hüttendorf is a protest camp and autonomous space against the construction of a motorway near Bielefeld in North Germany. The A33 has been planned since 1937 and building started 25 years ago. 30 kilometres are yet to be built, which will in parts lead through highly sensitive ancient woodland.

The first camp was set up about 6 years ago near Dissen, on a bit of the route already in use today. In the beginning, there were only 2-3 people who were ignored by the police and who had never thought this would turn into a long-term project. The more surprised everyone was when more and more people came, and when the camp was finally evicted, there were enough motivated people to move on a few kilometres and set up a new camp.

Since then, about 5 camps were set up successively, which were the base for actions such as site invasions and road blockades. The motivation amongst people involved is quite diverse, but these might be the main aspects: First of all, the 'Hüttendorf' is a protest camp against the A33 and building of motorways in general, with the transformation of the Earth into a concrete desert. Included in this is resistance to the whole capitalist system and inhuman society, which motorways are only an element of. Beyond that, living in the Hüttendorf means, or at least it should mean, to be able to live a life with more freedom and quality than possible in the 'outside world' of anonymity, conformity and pressure.

In its best times, about 15-20 people were living in the camp but there have been quite bad times as well. Two years ago, there were two camps at the same time after one was unsuccessfully evicted. These quickly turned into camps of quite different character. In February 1997, one of the camps was finally evicted so people moved together which led to conflicts, with endless discussions about veganism, sexism and political correctness. We still managed to put on an RTS in Dissen in August 1997 (see separate article).

We were expecting an eviction any day in the early spring of 1998, so we started building barricades, putting up new walkways and so on. In July/August we tried to find a new site for the next camp, but there weren't many state-owned plots left. We finally found nearly a whole forest owned by an Earl/Lord (or whatever). Obviously we weren't too successful when we tried to ask him for a bit of land to set up camp, so we started squatting on his territory. Generally, the actions of this summer were rather symbolic. Not having many 'climbers' at the time, we mainly set up tents and started building huts, building a tower only once. We were evicted about every two days and taken to the police station regularly. So we didn't get very far, just got on their nerves a bit and showed we wouldn't give up.

Although we had been expecting an eviction of the main camp for a long time, it finally came as a surprise in October 1998. There were only four people in the trees and some others in their huts and wagons who were quickly surrounded by cops. Still, the eviction could be stopped for a few hours as they had problems getting people out of the trees. Although the cops has a special climbing unit, they had to call a cherrypicker. Cutting started right away and falling trees nearly hit treesitters. They even started felling a tree two people were sitting on. Fortunately, no one got hurt. There weren't any arrests but we might be held liable for the whole cost of the eviction, about DM 150,000.

Everyone was burnt out and motivation rather low after the eviction. Cops harassed and followed the 'Huettendoerflern' everywhere. We were also hassled by the landlord of a nearby flat everyone had moved to (15 of us plus several dogs instead of the usual 6 inhabitants). There were hardly any actions at that time.





We still didn't want to give up and planned another action for November. A lot of new, motivated people came to take the land and unlike previous actions in summer everything was quite well planned and organised. It took 2-3 hours until we were evicted just because of one person sitting on top of a hut we built, for which they ordered the fire brigade especially.

This gave us a kick and we made plans for another action at Christmas. So while the rest of Borgholzhausen was sitting around their Christmas trees, 10 activists went into the woods and set up a new 'Hüttendorf' on the Earl's land. Cops cleared this quickly, but we ran and hid in a nearby derelict house the police didn't care to remove us as they thought the house was to dodgy to enter. So after they left, we climbed out and started building a camp again. This method worked until the cops cleared and destroyed the house with a special unit, but we continued resquatting, until everyone, including the cops and the landowner, was worn out. They had been confiscating all our sleeping bags and tools every morning, it couldn't go on like this forever.

Therefore, we finally arranged a meeting with the police and the landowner from which we didn't expect much. And nobody understands the outcome —we were granted a new site on which we'll be legally allowed to set up camp. By now, there are already a few wagons and people are busy building huts. If you want to drop by you're more than welcome, just give us a call.

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Reclaim the Streets in Germoney

This is intended to be a short overview of the RTS-movement in Germany. The first big RTS under this name (although we obviously have always had street parties as part of the squatting movement) took place on August 30th 1997 in Dissen, a small town in the North. They're building a motorway there (see above). About 200-300 people came for it and the crowd moved through the streets around a soundsystem. The cops didn't know how to react at first because even they didn't feel they could use their usual force against such a happy, dancing mob. So they just accompanied us and there are rumours that some were even seen dancing! At some point the main road was taken, at the time the only connection between Osnabrück and Bielefeld, two major cities. It was blockaded with a tractor, tripods and lock-ons and the cops were told the party would stay there for 2-3 hours. After hesitating a bit, the police decided clearing the crowd would probably take longer than that so they'd just stand by and be bored. After about 2 hours of wild dancing everything was packed up and people moved on to one of the many motorway construction sites nearby to have a party lasting long into the night and attracting most of the local kids.

This successful action inspired two people in Berlin to start preparing an RTS there. Unfortunately it took a while to get more people involved. But the first RTS in Berlin took place in November 1997, which admittedly had asked the police for permission and was disrupted by a lot of stop and search by the stupid cops. The advertising hadn't been perfect either so only about 100-150 people got together, but those that came were enthusiastic about this type of action, far from the commercialism of the Love Parade. Then the soundsystem gave up (always remember to bring enough fuel for the generator!) which kind of killed the party, so people went on to demonstrate about the eviction of a squatted Spanish village.

This wasn't exactly what I had imagined an RTS to be like (no occupation, no blockades, stupid cops lined up around it... bah), but at least the atmosphere and the response were good. And people got to know each other which led to the formation of a proper collective which got the ball rolling for the next Berlin RTS. At first, there were just four of us; but we distributed flyers and soon the group grew to include about 10 people. The next Berlin RTS was to be on May 16th 1998 (the Global Day of Action), to protest together with all those others across the world against the World Trade Organisation meeting in Geneva and the G7/8 summit in Birmingham. Our motto was 'Fun can be Resistance!' But before things got serious there was an RTS in Bielefeld in April 1998. About 200 people demonstrated against the privatisation of public roads, the construction of the A33 as well as the fact that people constantly get moved on out of town centres. After initial difficulties (the cops were very stubborn) a junction was taken and blockaded with two tripods and two lock-ons, and a truck suddenly revealed a soundsystem. People started dancing right away and a lot of

passers-by joined in as the party was next to a busy car boot sale. The cops didn't know what to do except to surround and stop the party for about 8 hours, arresting 170 people, locking them up over night and subjecting them to physical and verbal abuse.

With this experience, our day in Berlin approached and believe me, we were nervous because we really couldn't tell how many people would come or how the infamous Berlin thug-police would react (and there had been quite a bit of rioting on the 1st of May that had really pissed them off).

A lot of people turned up at the meeting point was at the Alexanderplatz, a so-called dangerous place with a constant police presence and security guards that hassle anyone who doesn't fit into their image of a consumer paradise. After a while the mob moved out to where the blockading group was waiting for the go-ahead and the Critical Mass cyclists arrived. So simultaneously an old car and some construction site fences blocked the road and two 10m high tripods were set up. Because I was stuck on one of those I could only watch from up high which was really boring... oh well, for the revolution... The soundsystem kicked in and the junction was filled with about 800 people. The weather was good (sun, sun, sun) and the busy road framed by the ugliest high-rises you could imagine was transformed for a few hours into a colourful oasis and freed from smelly traffic. The cops again couldn't figure out how to react; it had all happened so quickly. They first called in special anti-terrorist units (SEK) and barricade breakers, but in the end stayed back. At 6pm the soundsystem, protected by a spontaneous flow of dancing people, moved out of the street and into a legalized squat and the party dissolved. The same night we squatted an empty factory and celebrated way into the night.



Of course the next RTS had to follow soon and it took place on the day of the general election, September 27th 1998. We were going to party in front of the SPD (Social Democrats) party headquarters, who were expected to win the election. The meeting point was further away this time and we used the underground to get to the party location. The cops wanted to act a bit more tough this time to 'protect' Berlin, but this move meant they completely lost us. When we arrived at the party headquarters after riding the train for about 10 minutes not a uniform was in sight which is always a nice thing. We had arrived with about 600 people and there was a soundsystem and tripod. A lot of things were painted, banners and hammocks etc. put up, but only because the organising group had nicked all these decorations in the preceding weeks. No punters brought anything themselves. It's a shame that so many people seem to have a consumer attitude towards such events. I hope a few feel guilty now!

The planned SPD-celebration 'Yay, it's our turn to fuck people over now!' was supposed to start at 6pm, so the cops started hassling people at half past five, moving into the crowd, arresting people and trying unsuccessfully to take the soundsystem. But after constant attacks, the truck with the soundsystem disappeared off. The party-mob moved on towards Kreuzberg and then drifted apart (unfortunately) before a proper riot could kick off, which I thought was a shame. Oh well.

There was another action in front of the Friedrichshain's (a Berlin district) town hall in October 1998 because the traffic commission was meeting to plan a six lane extension to the bypass. It was all on short notice so only about 70 people turned up. We had ghettoblasters and drums and a large main road was occupied. Half an hour later the cops showed up, so the party moved into the town hall to pay a visit to the traffic commission. The half-witted cops had parked their vans in the middle of the road so the traffic was stopped for a further 45 minutes anyway. We had great fun in the town hall where we sat on the tables in the meeting hall and hung banners over the city map and out of the window. We met with much solidarity from passers-by and even from some commission members. The motorway won't be built for a while yet, but the resistance to it is already growing (the next M11?).

More RTS's had been planned. There's a lot to do, so come round sometime. Send loveletters to:
RTS, c/o M99, Manteufellstr. 99, 10997 Berlin, Germany. Website: http://rts.squat.net



Antifascists in Action


Leipzig, May '98

On the May 1st 1998, the Junge National-demokraten (JN), the fascist youth organisation of the NPD (nazi-party) and the NPD itself called a rally in Leipzig under the slogan 'Day of National Resistance'. They had previously planned a demonstration which was banned by the German judiciary. Nonetheless, a rally could still be held for which they were predicting 10-15,000 boneheads participating. May 1st is a traditional workers' day on which they have taken their demands for higher wages, better working conditions and social services out onto the streets, but also celebrates the revolutionary struggle of the working class worldwide. It's an opportunity for all disenfranchised, marginalised, exploited people who've had enough of the capitalist torture to demonstrate (usually) militantly against the inhumane living and working conditions forced upon us. The antifascists and other like-minded radical people felt trapped. What were we supposed to do: give the nazi scum a kicking and thus be unable to take our own agenda (a society free of control, power, discrimination and hierarchy) out onto the streets, or ignore the fascists and concentrate on the various revolutionary demonstrations to show the ruling elite were fed up with their shit? Why not have both, we thought!

The Antifa called a counter-demonstration and 5000-6000 fighters showed up. The nazis assembled about 5000 shitheads at their rally at the War Memorial, which is in light of their predictions quite pathetic, but still a huge and threatening mobilisation, signaling that times have changed and it's not as easy as it was in the '80s to kick them off the streets.

To sum it up—even though it's quite alarming that the nazis are now able to organise and mobilise such large numbers, forcing us to adopt new strategies, I do consider the day a success. The fascists realised it was dangerous to march. Lots of their busses were trashed, lots of boneheads were sent to hospital and the cops had to pay the costs of protecting the fascists. We had shown an energetic and determined act of resistance and made clear that we are not going to tolerate their dehumanising propaganda. After the riots in Leipzig, the antifascists got into their cars and busses and the war was taken to Berlin where it turned into mass rioting in support of the revolutionary demonstrations there.

On September 19th 1998, the JN and NPD once again called a rally, this time as part of their election campaign. The planned location for their rally proved to be the height of cynicism. They wanted to hold it in front of the 'Sonnenblumenhaus' in Rostock, formerly inhabited by refugees and immigrants, which was the target of a racist and fascist mob in August 1992 (see box). Apparently the JN and NPD see themselves in the same tradition as the racist mob. After the usual court proceedings, a rally at the 'Sonnenblumenhaus' was prohibited and the



nazis had to pursue a different route through Rostock. So, 3,000 fuckfaces turned up, while the 'Coalition against the Right' assembled up to 10,000 people in front of the 'Sonnenblumenhaus' where a rather liberal, bourgeois and 'multicultural' event took place as a sign of peace, communication and tolerance.

Meanwhile 2000 autonomous antifascists demonstrated in the city and were subjected to brutal attacks by the police, as well as constant provocations and arbitrary arrests. 117 antifascists were taken into custody on that day. Due to the huge amount of cops (6000) it was almost impossible to get near the route of the nazi demonstration in order to disrupt it. This time the cops established a spatial seperation between the nazis and the antifa, so the skins didn't face severe and effective resistance.

Finally, the day was overshadowed by a tragic incident during the demonstration: 60 nazis attacked, unnoticed, the antifascist information tent and injured 2 people. On their retreat, a nazi ran over a 28 year old antifascist with his car. The antifascist, Holger, fell immediately into a coma (fortunately, he woke up 8 days later) but now has to cope with severe brain damage. It's clear that despite the fact that more than 10000 people demonstrated against fascism and there was a rather successful co-operation with the 'Coalition against the Right', it was an ineffective action which could have ended fatally for one of the antifas. Rostock was not a success.

From the 24th of July until the August 1st, an antiracist camp took place in Rothenburg in Eastern Germany, on the Polish border. The whole thing was initiated by 'Kein Mensch ist Illegal' (No human is illegal), a campaign fighting for the rights of refugees and immigrants. It started off with a weekend of techno. The vibes were provided by Radical Rave, a left-wing Berlin-based techno collective. The action orientated camp aimed to resist and protest against the hunt for humans along the German/Polish border by the German border patrol. Furthermore, the activists demonstrated against the willingness of the German population to grass up refugees or immigrants who have fled to Germany (more than 70% of arrested immigrants are caught this way). About 400 people from Italy, Poland, Switzerland and Germany participated in the camp. Most of them are organised in antiracist/antifascist groups.

Their actions were aimed at causing disorder and irritation for the BGS (German border patrol), to disturb the smooth routine with which the police and the population hunt immigrants. The camp was a show of solidarity with all those who flee hunger, war and exploitation, and those who have to leave their home countries for various reasons. Migration and refugees are a result of a 'neo-liberal' capitalist world order and arms sold to fascist regimes.

Since 1993, according to official statistics, 57 people have died while trying to cross the border illegally. The German/Polish border, one of the clearest dividing lines between 'poor' Eastern and 'affluent' Western Europe, has the highest density of cops in Europe. They are equipped with helicopters, infrared cameras, heat detectors and night vision gadgets.

The Truth Lies in Rostock

78 minute video available from 'Spectacle', TV Centre, Thackeray Road, London SW8 3TV, UK

In August 1992 in Rostock, northeastern Germany, a mob of fascists attacked a tower block, home to Vietnamese guest workers. The city's population stood by, clapping, the police withdrew and only took proper action against antifascists when they turned up. The siege of the refugee centre lasted three days.

When I first heard about it back then I was a schoolkid in Germany and I was utterly horrified. This was the first news of 'neo-nazi' violence I had heard of. Being half Asian, I was scared to go out for a while and stared intently at my classmates to figure out if they would have participated. And I absolutely refused to watch it on TV, so when I recently watched this video it was quite intense.

The footage has been collected from actually inside the refugee centre, an ugly high rise in the middle of an estate, and from in front of the building as the fascists raged. There are also a range of interviews with Vietnamese guest workers, antifascists who were with them during the attack, the police and authorities as well as local nazis and sympathisers.

The police unwillingly admit they withheld forces and residents willingly admit their bigotry and endorsement of the attack. It started as a rumour of a fascist action and escalated into an angry crowd setting fire to an inhabited building. A 'foreigner free estate' was the goal and it's fucking scary.

This was not just an episode in recent history, it stands in the context of increasing fascist organisation in Europe. This video is a wake up call. Someday it could be too late to halt fascist activity, it can appear in full force out of nowhere.



There was a demonstration on the November 21st 1998, in commemoration of the antifascist Silvio Meier who was stabbed to death by proud German scum in 1992. This time 2500 people attended and demonstrated against the 'Cafe Germania', a pub run by the well-known nazi Andreas Voigt. It is located in Berlin-Lichtenhagen and has been a meeting place for nazis to get organised and plan attacks against left-wing projects or anyone who doesn't fit into their narrow-minded fascist world view. So a coalition had been formed, political pressure mounted and the antifa did the appropriate DIY glazing. A couple of weeks later, in December, the pub closed due to the massive public pressure.



Another thing worth mentioning is the 'Koepi', an old squat in Berlin, which is a self-organised, non profit DIY social centre as well as being home to about 40 people. It was to be sold on the 16th of February 1999. So on the 13th, over 2000 people took their solidarity out on the streets and protested against the gentri--fication that is happening all over Berlin. The night after the demo, an autonomous group smashed some windows at the 'Hackeschen Hoefe' (a yuppie club) that used to be a squat. At the auction, no bidder dared to raise their hand for the Koepi, so for now it remains ours.

Other actions I won't go into now were two antifascist demos in Saarbruecken (Southern Germany), a women's/lesbians' camp in Goerlitz, the biggest animal liberation action in Germany etc. I just wanted to give a small impression of what's happening over here. The autonomous movement is still in a process of restructuring and rethinking, but will hopefully soon be alive and kicking as it should be! Have a nice riot—the future belongs to us!

Fascist organisation in Germany is on the increase.

Since the 'reunification' East Germans have realised Western capitalism is fucking them over just as badly as the old 'communist' state, nazi political parties have been gaining votes and more and more young people have been turning to fascism as a rebellious youth culture.

Fascist organisations are supposed to be banned under German legislation, but obviously there are ways of getting around this—from avoiding certain key words in your manifestos to disbanding and coming together under a different name. The German State has turned a blind eye towards fascists. In fact, politicians have even been adopting the nazis' rhetoric ("This second generation of migrants are unnecessary in the economic system") and giving in to their demands when it suits them, tightening the laws on immigration every once in a while. Raids against fascists are blatantly half-hearted. For example, the same day saw a series of raids on fascists yielding 60 guns and several kilos of explosives, and raids on antifascists yielding nothing but some clay which tenuously was declared 'a potential part of an explosive'. The antifascists were prosecuted under paragraph 129 (membership of a proscribed organisation), whereas the fascists were not.

Attacks on shops run by foreigners, on asylum seekers' holding facilities and on alternative centres, squats and the like happen almost everyday and don't even make the headlines anymore. In one city alone, Chemnitz, there were at least 35 violent attacks on migrants, punks and others by fascists between January 1997-98. A number of antifascists and foreigners have been killed by fascist gangs.

A friend in Berlin said "The nazis are showing themselves more openly than ever. It's not unusual to have a bunch of them hassling you on your way home from shopping. There are some areas where anarchists, migrants and others the nazis dislike just won't dare to go to anymore (e.g. Berlin Lichtenberg, Hellersdorf, Marzahn…)."

The concept of 'liberated zones' the NPD (German National Party) have been pushing—creating a fascist popular youth culture, a 'cultural hegemony' that has an area totally under its control—has certainly succeeded in certain parts of Germany. It's 'the thing to do' for many young people, increasingly disillusioned with conventional parliamentary politics and facing unemployment and general misery. Antifascism has failed to rise to the challenge, and anarchist or left politics are not attractive anymore...

Peace on Bougainville?
Ceasefire Holds But Rebels Remain Cautious



Bougainville, with a population of only 160,000 has managed to close and keep closed one of the biggest copper mines in the world. Despite having to fight the well armed Papua New Guinea (PNG) army, they have held their ground for 11 years primarily with homemade guns made out of water piping and planks. Thanks to their constant resistance the self described 'ecological revolutionaries' of Bougainville are near to victory- total autonomy.

Bougainville island lies only 7km west from the nearest of the Solomon Islands. Originally colonised by the Dutch, it then fell under German and, after World War I, Australian control. Despite close cultural and geographical links with the Solomon Islands, it was governed as part of Papua New Guinea (320 miles to the west). When PNG was given 'independence' in 1975, Bougainville island was placed under its flag.

Ecological Destruction

In 1969 CRA, an Australian subsidiary of the British mining giant Rio Tinto Zinc forcibly established a copper mine. From the beginning the island's people resisted. News footage of women fighting with riot cops over survey pegs received international coverage. In Bougainville women are the traditional landowners; land is passed from 'woman to woman'. To put it lightly, on this occasion it was clear their land was not being passed on in the traditional manner. The building of the mine saw 800 villagers landless and another 1,400 without fishing rights as land was seized and rainforest destroyed. The subsistence life of gardening and fishing was destroyed. 220 hectares of rainforest was poisoned, burned and bulldozed. After 20 years the mine had grown to a huge crater 1/2 km deep and nearly 7km in circumference, creating over a billion tonnes of waste. This was dumped into the Jaba river valley, creating a wall of waste hundreds of metres high, turning one of the islands biggest river systems bright blue.

Ecological Revolution

In 1988, after two decades of ignored protests, petitions & compensation claims, Bougainvilleans had had enough. A handful of islanders stole company explosives, destroying electricity pylons, buildings and machinery. By using guerrilla tactics they succeeded in closing the mine. Until the war broke out in 1988, the mine accounted for around 45% of all Papua New Guinea's total export earnings. Without these earnings PNG is quickly going bust. Papua New Guinea, with the assistance of Australia, responded by sending in the military. Bougainville



declared itself independent of PNG and Bougainvilleans formed the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) to defend their land and people from further exploitation.

"We wouldn't stand idle and see our... people being killed so we had to stand up and defend somehow, and it was then that we thought of forming a militant type organisation to contain what the security forces were doing to us."
- BRA spokesperson

10,000 Dead in Australia's Secret Vietnam

Since then the governments of Australia and PNG have waged a prolonged and brutal war against the people of Bougainville with the purpose of re-opening the Panguna copper mine and avoiding secession from PNG. The Bougainvilleans are getting no outside aid from any country, and are seriously outgunned, yet their persistence and jungle strategy has defeated an impressive military machine.

The Australian government claims that it does not support PNG's war on the people of Bougainville. *It's lying!* Australia has been funding, arming and directing the PNG military since the beginning. Australia provides PNG with $32 million in military aid plus much more in untied aid. Over half of the PNG Defence Force has been trained in Australia. Australian military advisors have been on the island directing PNG army operations. Guns and ammunition used by the PNG army are manufactured and/or supplied by Australia.Australian Intelligence advised PNG to enforce a total goods and services blockade of the island, including medical supplies. For the duration of the war no-one was allowed on or off the island. Many of those carrying supplies in or refugees out were killed by the PNG army who maintained a stranglehold around the island thanks to Australian provided patrol boats, speedboats, Iroquois helicopters and Nomad aircraft. Australia thought the Bougainvilleans would crack after '3-4 weeks', yet they held strong for 10 years.

Since the start of the war thanks to massacres and preventable diseases 10,000 people have died - 7% of the population. In an attempt to isolate the Bougainville Revolutionary Army from the civilian population, the military demolished villages and herded the villagers into 'care centres'(post-Vietnam Newspeak for concentration camps).

"Bougainvilleans agree that environment concerns cannot be disassociated from human concerns. "Environment" encompasses both ecological and cultural rights; the two are often sacrificed side by side. Government tactics such as the forced evictions and populations transfers are part and parcel of development that, in the name of economic growth, justify ecological destruction and the dispossession of peoples. The intent of the perpetrators of this evil war and siege is to to create disunity on the islands through suffering and death, to torture us into submission, to steal back the mining resources at the expense of our society and our environment, to own the people and their island."
-Martin Mirriori, Bougainville Peace office
(From 'Bougainville: A Sad and Silent Tragedy in the South Pacific', *Do or Die* no. 5, p 59)

Australia has many reasons for trying to destroy the Bougainville rebellion. The main reasons are it's industrial and geo-political interests. The Rio Tinto Zinc subsidiary that owned the mine is Australian and the the resistance on Bougainville could serious-



The volcano Mt.Bagana lies in BRA territory in the centre of the island.On Bougainville it's not just the people who are active.



ly weaken Australia's hold on the region. As mentioned above, from 1918 to 1975 (with a brief interruption during World War II) PNG was under colonial occupation by Australia. PNG became an 'independent' state in 1975 and was shaped by Australia as a power block between it and the evolving regional superpower—Indonesia (See page XXX). PNG's western-sponsored elite's control of its own population is very unstable. PNG is not welded together by a common language or culture, but is still mainly tribal. Many have declared their wish to, as a common saying goes, 'do a Bougainville'. The PNG military has been weakened greatly by the loss of the revenue from the mine, and if the BRA are successful it would almost definitely trigger similar struggles for self-rule on the mainland and in the region in general. In such a situation the PNG military could simply collapse. Indonesia (which is already in forced occupation of neighbouring West Papua- see page XXX) would probably take advantage of the power vacuum and invade PNG. This would seriously weaken Australian power in the region.



Order 2133 PNG Defence Force 21/5/96

"Search for the rebels and kill them... Any civilians who are suspected of harbouring the BRA must be killed without question... Get the rebels out. Do not leave any of them, but wipe them out... Destroy all food - gardens, houses and any shelter found in the jungle, clean it up... Any civilian found to be an ordinary civilian is to be forced into care centres. If anyone is disorderly they must be beaten."

"Your Darkest Hour Has Arrived"

The war continued for 10 years with the people of Bougainville experiencing the most degrading violations: murder, torture, beatings and rape by the Papua New Guinea Defence Force and its pro-PNG 'Resistance Force'. Australian-supplied phosphorus bombs exploded in the villages. When fragments of these bombs made contact with the skin, they created wounds which did not heal. Especially with the blockade preventing access to medicines. The wounds went gangrenous, limbs dropped off, many died. When BRA representatives turned up for peace talks in '95, they were fired on by PNG troops. Every year brought another massive PNG invasion. Every year the Bougainvilleans won against the odds. In May '96 the biggest operation to date was heralded by the the PNG Prime Minister with the televised message *"Your Darkest Hour Has Arrived"* (see Order 2133 box above). Hundreds of soldiers smashed through the Jungle destroying villages-only to be driven back into the sea through it's own controlled territory. The Bougainvillean combination of determination and luck won the day. It was becoming increasingly obvious that the Australian backed PNG army could not defeat the BRA- they needed help.

British Mercenaries and National Crisis

In January 1997, the PNG government hired the London based mercenaries, Sandline International, to contain and neutralise the BRA (a euphemism for kill, maim and murder the people of Bougainville). The name may jog the memory of many British readers as it was Sandline who were implicated in the same year in the British government 'Arms to Sierra Leone' scandal. Consisting of some of the best trained and armed elite troops in the world Sandline (see 'Achieving an Executive Outcome' box on following page) promised in its contract to:

> "In particular provide personnel and related services and equipment to conduct offensive operations in Bougainville in conjunction with PNG Defence Forces to render the BRA militarily ineffective and repossess the mine."

Sandline imported two attack helicopters, two troop carrying helicopters, six rocket launchers, one hundred AK-47s, ten rocket-propelled grenade launchers and smoke/fragmentation grenades. News began to seep out about British and South African mercenaries training PNG forces with night-fighting equipment. Journalists who approached the 15,000 hectare compound on PNG were detained and their cameras taken. Meanwhile 500 miles away back on the



Achieving an Executive Outcome...

Since it's formation in 1989, Executive Outcomes(EO)/Sandline has fielded a force of over 500 elite soldiers, mostly under the command of white South African officers. They're based at Plaza, 107 Ltd in Kings Road, Chelsea, London. They are led by Ed Barlow, the ex-head of the South African Army's 'political assassination and torture wing'. EO/Sandline soldiers remain, as they were before the end of Apartheid, at the forefront of counter-revolutionary warfare. A UNESCO report on EO's activities in Sierra Leone accused them of performing "all kinds of illegal acts" in their pursuit of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). EO soldiers fired on civilians from helicopters and used fuel air explosives (the next stage up from Napalm) to burn entire forest areas - and everyone in them.

A report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (in *London Review of Books* 26/2/97) identifies EO as an organisation whose "biggest operations so far have been in countries with valuable mineral resources". EO is part of large corporate umbrella group with close associates being involved in private security, air charter, and mining amaongst other things. Or as the Observer put it;

"Executive Outcomes' mercenaries are not simply 'guns for hire'. They are the advance guard for major business interests engaged in a latter day scramble for the mineral wealth of Africa."

Dr Smith from the Centre for Defence Studies at Kings College, London, says companies such as EO often operate in a triangle of interests- their fees being paid directly or indirectly by large multinational corporations, and these corporations in turn receive mining, logging or other resource concessions from the government. Sandline/EO itself is financially linked to a mining company. It can wipe out the rebels then harvest the profit. This is what it was planning in Bougainville. When the BRA closed the mine, they found maps of five other mineral deposits on the island. "We truly believe that all of Bougainville is under threat of destruction by these mining corporations", said BRA leader, Francis Ona. Throughout most of the war the BRA's best supply of weapons has been from captured PNG soldiers. When asked what he thought about the collapse of the Sandline operation one BRA fighter replied,"The mercenraies had better weapons. By now we could have rocket-launchers, mortars, AK-47s."

island, Bougainvilleans used to the reality of being machine gunned from helicopters and rained on by shells braced themselves for an attack. What happened next surprised everyone.

In March '97 PNG suffered what commentators described as its biggest ever crisis. Riots and looting rocked the capital Port Moresby, Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan was forced by the military to resign and the British/South African mercenaries, their mission abandoned, retreated across the airport tarmac under the eyes of locals waving banners saying 'Piss Off'.

It had started when the by now public contract with Sandline was criticised by the PNG army Brigadier Jerry Singirok, many of whose own troops hadn't been paid for months. He demanded Sandline be expelled and the Prime Minister resign. On his orders troops put the Sandline mercenaries under arrest. The cabinet quickly sacked him but the damage had been done.

At 9am the following morning, a crowd gathered outside the Head Quarters of the PNG Army. It quickly swelled in size to about 3,000. The troops ordered to release the mercenaries refused, claiming loyalty to their sacked leader. Police tried to stop the crowd marching on parliament to deliver a petition, who jeered a cabinet delegation sent to collect it and then went wild. An afternoon of rioting and looting followed. With the nation unravelling and the military no longer allied to the Prime Minister he resigned after being openly threatened by the rebel army faction. After a week of imprisonment the mercenaries were sent packing with the exception of Colonel Tim Spicer, who was later released thanks to the British High Commissioner who paid his bail.

The people of Bougainville and the BRA, who a few weeks beforehand were facing an assault of unprecedented magnitude, were in a state of cautious celebration. Their opponents, the PNG government and its defence forces, had proven to be their own worst enemies. Once again Bougainville's luck was in.

Fragile Peace

After the Sandline crisis, despite years of war, murder and oppression the Bougainvilleans were left in a position of great strength and their enemies in one of relative weakness. In July 1997, from this position of strength the Bougainvillians initiated a peace process.

On 30 April 1998, a cease-fire agreement was signed. It was agreed that an unarmed UN Peace Monitoring Group would participate that included

New Zealand, Fijian, Vanuatuan and (ominously) Australian troops.

In August 1998, a Pan Bougainville Leaders Congress was held involving the traditional chiefs as well as representatives of the women of Bougainville. The Pan Bougainville Congress believed that:

> "The people of Bougainville are united in their common aspiration for an independent homeland' and called for the 'Government of Papua New Guinea to give the people of Bougainville, as a matter of principle, the chance to exercise their individual and collective rights to self-determination."

Elections were held in May 1999 for a new Bougainville Peoples Congress (BPC) and Joseph Kabui, former vice-president of the BRA-linked Bougainville Interim Government, was elected President with an overwhelming majority of 77 votes out of a 101 member Congress. His nearest rival, the PNG backed former Premier of the puppet Bougainville Transitional Government, Gerard Sinato, only received 10 votes.

Unsurprisingly PNG and New Zealand tried to subvert the whole process. Shortly before the elections in April, New Zealand invited a group of Bougainville leaders over for a 'study tour'. Once there, the leaders were confronted with a new 'agreement' to sign in the presence of the current Prime Minister of Papua New Guineae. The Bougainvilleans were not prepared and some signed the document. The Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) withdrew from the discussions and did not sign.

As part of the cease-fire agreement the BRA continues to hold onto their weapons but (usually) they do not carry them. To disarm while the war could still restart would be madness. One lesson revolutionary movements around the globe have learnt is never give up your guns and never disband people's militias. PNG unsurprisingly have reneged so far on their side of the bargain by not starting a phased withdrawal of its forces.

Splits in the Revolutionary Army?

Although the Western press has reported a split in the BRA between leaders Sam Kauno and Francis Ona (and their respective advisers and supporters) this position attempts to sensationalise and simplify a complex situation. Both so-called factions are united in their quest for Bougainville's independence. From the outset, Francis Ona as the then leader of the



The BRA's guns were made from water piping (for the barrels) and planks (for the butts) taken from the mine. Their lathes are powered by coconut oil, as are their vehicles. 'Green Technology' does have a future after all! For more practical info, see page xxx.

Bougainville Interim Government refused to join the peace process and refused to disarm whilst PNG Defence forces still occupy Bougainville and before Bougainville gained her independence. More recently, he has refused the offer of 5 member seats within the Bougainville Peoples Congress. However, apart from a show of arms to preserve their claimed territory—the declared no-go zone in centre of the island including the mine—the Francis Ona faction has not resorted to the use of arms during the peace process. The Sam Kauno faction remain committed to the peace process although they have not ruled out a return to arms if PNG reneges on the terms of the Cease Fire Agreement, especially in relation to the



"We Will Close Gold Mine!" say Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army

It looks like indigenous people in the neighbouring Solmon Islands might be 'doing a Bougainville'. Fighting and the apparent birth of a new armed resistance group this June is threatening the running of the Australian run Ross Mining NL Gold Ridge gold mine. The mine was opened late last year after being bitterly opposed by the indigenous people. In what looks like a re-run of the beginning of the Bougainville war, during unprecedented civil unrest the newly formed Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA) declared that they will close the gold mine.The conflict has just opened up and the GRA's motivations are unclear. The BRA says it has no combatants fighting with the GRA.

withdrawal of PNG defence forces.In some respects Francis Ona's position has been vindicated by PNG's intransigence on the issue of withdrawing its troops. The government of Papua New Guinea continues to state that its troops cannot be withdrawn (although they are confined to barracks) until civil authority has been established and that 'Independence is non-negotiable', as the PNG constitution does not allow it. Independence, both from PNG and from the rule of the global elite, has been the goal of the Bougainville people ever since the corporate machine tried to suck Bougainvillean into itself in 1969.

"The Future is Before Us and the Struggle Continues"

Freedom remains some way off. The path towards autonomy has forced open warfare on the people of Bougainville. The effort now is to secure a settlement and rebuild the island communities ravaged by the war, oppression from Papua New Guinea and mineral exploitation. The people of Bougainville remain hopeful and optimistic while guarded about the possible pitfalls awaiting them.

Although foreign aid programs are being implemented around the island, the bulk of the aid is being directed towards the northern section of the largest island and the northern tip island of Buka. This as a blatant attempt to placate revolutionary sentiments among the historically more developed sectors of Bougainville and build an anti-independence vote. Already there are leaders within the Buka community saying they don't want independence from PNG. The success of their struggle has been thanks largely to the Bougainvilleans absolute determination. It has also been thanks to their position in the world. On the periphery of the global economic order they have successfully pushed back the machine's tentacles, fighting in a largely undestroyed mountainous jungle ecology hospitable to guerrilla activity.

A surprising number of peoples on the global periphery, like the BRA in Bougainville or the Jungle Commando Maroons of Surinam have succeeded in facing off the invasion of their land by industrial exploitation. Many of these peoples fight with such tenacity because in subsuming themselves to industry they have everything to lose and nothing to gain. The Bougainvillean culture of forest gardening and fishing, where women are the 'landowners' is an organic one. It has grown within, not against the ecology they call home. They have fought against the industrial machine and for their *small scale* ecological society. This is their strength. From the Russian Green Armys and the Spanish anarchist peasants of Aragon to the Indigenous Zapatistas of Mexico (see page XXX), people immersed in the land, in ecological culture, have always been the prime fighters in the struggle between community and capitalism.

"Land is our life, land is our physical life- food and sustenance. Land is our social life, it is marriage; it is status; it is security; it is politics; in fact, it is our only world. When you take our land, you cut out the very heart of our existence."

While other peoples have been fooled by the crushing feelings of cultural inferiority the global economy perpetuates they have stood firm in defence of their culture. Yet the war and now the peace has forced on them changes. Among others a national process of decision making, of government. Though the population and landmass is small this move away from the local as the arena of power is very dangerous. The history of rebellion is too full of liberators who turn into jailors, of radicals who gain power and become turncoats. The small size of Bougainville and its lack of industry/urban culture means it is inherently less likely to transform into a class ridden society. The Bougainvillean resolve to never let mining restart is the greatest guard against this process. The Francis Ona led BRA faction is standing strong by keeping a no-go zone around the mine. Having defeated the PNG army time after time what new social forms will Bougainvilleans come up with? In 1992 the people of Panguna, where the mine site is situated declared:

"We now understand and have seen with our own eyes the destructive effects of the copper



> mine operations on our land, our environment, our society and our culture. The mine will remain closed for the rest of our lives."

Despite all manner of horrors they kept that promise. In Spring this year the Director of Bougainville Copper Limited said in a public hearing in Melbourne:

> "Although I, personally, and none of my staff have been to the mine site, we get a fair amount of intelligence. People do go there, particularly from the church, and reports are that almost everything has been destroyed one way or another, either deliberately, through deterioration, theft or whatever."

Today the forest has began to reclaim the mine site as its own. Many thousands of lives have been lost as a result of this mine. But through their determination, the people of Bougainville have stopped Rio Tinto, the largest mining company in the world, from further despoilation of their land.

Bougainville And Us

The struggle of the people of Bougainville is not just some distant cause to support, we can learn a lot from them. They show us that against the odds, resistance is possible, even victory. The Bougainvilleans started off using non-violent tactics. They were viciously beaten. To defeat a powerful enemy and defend their land and community they made the decision to turn to armed struggle. We are a long way off from that situation, but one day we too may be faced with that question. Bougainville also shows us what the elite's reaction would be if we began to really threaten them and build a truly ecological counter-culture.

Bougainville deserves our solidarity. As mentioned above foreign aid is being funnelled to some communities to breed disunity. After a decade of war, Bougainville is in desperate need of basic things like medical supplies. It is up to us in anarchist and radical ecological movements around the world to provide that support. No one else will.

When news of the '96 military sweep (see Order 2133 box) came to us three years ago activists in Britain organised a blockade of the Australian Embassy. The threat of action got the Embassy closed for the day so instead 60 people invaded Rio Tinto Zinc's headquarters and paint bombed it. In '97 when the mercenaries were sent over we did an action against the Papua New Guinea Embassy. Both actions got wide press coverage. Nothing gets the Australian Press attention more than the Poms calling them murderers. It is possible that war might break out again. If that happens we need to act fast. We will need to target the offices of Australian and Papua New Guinean interests in Britain and around the world. Our individual actions may be small but together global solidarity can have a real effect.

Against the odds Bougainvillean have managed to hold their ground. It's up to us to carry out the vital work of taking their struggle global. Let's pull together and support Bougainville!

What You can Do

Educate Yourself

*Background information and regular updates can be found on http://www.eco-action.org/bv/

*Read *Plunder* edited by Roger Moody, (Partizans), 200 pages, £6.95 Available from AK Press (See page XXX). This great book is co-written by communities all around the globe fighting the mining giant RTZ. It's the most comprehensive account of one corporations destruction and oppression.

*Get on the Australian Bougainville Freedom Movements E-mail news list by sending your address to: v.john@uts.edu.au

*See 'Bougainville: A Sad and Silent Tragedy in the South Pacific', *Do or Die* no 5 p59

*Organise a Bougainville talk/filmshow in your town. Contact the Brighton address below for speakers and help.

Get on the Network

*Subscribe to the Bougainville Freedom Movement's magazine *Garumut*. Send (Australian) $20 in cash with your return address to: Bougainville Freedom Movement, PO Box 134, Erskineville NSW Au 2043 Ph: 61 2 9558 2730

Take Action

*If you or your group are interested in actions in Britain send your details to BFM, c/o South Downs EF!, Prior House, Tilbury Place, Brighton, E.Sussex or phone pager 0336-760424

*If you live outside Britain contact the Australian address above.

Raise Money

*Cash for medical aid, clothing, radios etc is desperately needed both for humanitarian reasons and to strengthen the more militant communities on the island- countering the opposite process being carried out by foreign charities. Organise a benefit gig, do a collection at your next meeting. What ever you can send do. Even a few pounds can make a real difference. All money you send will be used for aid only and will go straight to the BRA heartlands. Send cash in Australian dollars to the Oz Bougainville Freedom Movement address above. If sending more than $50 you should do a cash transfer through a bank to the following account. 'Bougainville Freedom Movement 2212 - 1002 - 9038, Commonwealth Bank, Newton Branch, Sydney, Australia.' Send the BFM a letter to inform them the your money transfer was to be used for aid.

Biting the Bullet
Hunt Sabbing in Sweden

It's August 1999 and the Swedish direct action group Peace in the Forest is preparing for its second year of hunt sabbing. So, what's hunt sabbing like in Sweden then? Well, first of all it's a new phenomenon here, although I suppose only if you don't count the hundreds of hunting towers which get torn down every year! Actually I think we are the only and first hunt sab group 'over here' which initially was a problem, but here's an account of what we did…

We needed information so we checked out the hunt sab homepages in the UK, especially the Hunt Saboteurs Association (see page XXX for their contact details) which was really useful, and we also read some books on hunting. In Sweden every hunter has to have a license and they have to attend a course to get it—so we read that coursebook too. We then decided to concentrate on the yearly hunt for the elk (moose) where they hunt it for a couple of weeks every autumn by posting a hidden hunter, and then, using dogs and men, they scare it towards the man with the gun.



We scouted an area near to where people lived in the centre of Sweden close to Stockholm. Because it's close to populated areas they are only allowed to hunt for five days each year. That way we figured we had a good chance of really making a practical difference. We had to do some undercover work in the town to get some details (along the lines of "Hi, my name is 'Jo' and every day I take my dog for a walk and I just wonder where you are going to hunt so I can take another path").

Next we assembled the group. We were going to hire a minibus so we figured eight people would be a good number. Then it would be easy for us to split up into two groups if necessary. Communication was to be handled by using two cellular phones. We set out for the action early one morning looking for hunters. We left a group in one end of the area, and the rest of us took the car to the other end. The plan was to walk towards the other group, scouting out hunters. But as we climbed out of the bus, we immediately discovered a hunter waiting with his car and his dog. We handed him an anti-hunt leaflet (which I think was a mistake as it was too early) and he took his car and drove away. We lost them in a short car chase.

We picked up the other group and started circling between the different potential hunting sites. Finally we found some of them. One man was sitting hidden between some bushes, overlooking a big field. So we occupied the field, making it impossible for him to fire. The other half of our group were involved in some stupid car chases were some of the hunters tried to trick us away from the place.

A woman from the documentary staff of the government controlled national television station and a camera man followed us during the whole day. We had had some discussion about whether or not to allow them to go with us, but we thought that they provided us with additional security and as we had some confidence in her, we thought that if it could provide some inspiration for others, we would gain more involvement—remember hunt sabbing was new here.

The day ended with mixed emotions. In another part of the forest they had managed to shoot one mother elk with two young. But we have showed them a new threat to their murdering business. It is all so very real when you put your body between the animal and the hunter and his rifle. We also learned some things: to have better communication gear and one additional car.

We've had a lot of response from people all over Sweden and we've since met other people who are planning their own groups now. There is some hope, although I still get very very sad every time I hear a shot in the forest. One more mother dies, one more father is maimed. They won't get away with it. Not any more—we'll be back. For more details on hunt sabbing in Sweden e-mail Peace in the Forest at: staffan.melin@usa.net.se



Action and Insurgency
An Interview with a Nepalese Activist



In May a coach load of activists from India and Nepal came to Britain as part of the Inter-Continental Caravan. While here they did an office action on a bio-technology greenwash company and visited a squatted ex-genetic test site (see page XXX). The Anarchist Teapot Action Kitchen did the catering, making them dinner and following them across fields with giant pans. As one of the cooks I was lucky enough to have many interesting chats with both the Indians and Nepalese. What follows is one such chat I had in the coach on the way back from the Crop Squat.

Could you tell me what organization you're involved in in Nepal?

I am involved in two. One is *'INHURED', (International Institute for Human Rights, Environment and Development)*, based in Katmandu, which is 10 years old. We are also part of a national network of movements which is called the *'National Concerned Society'*.

A lot of work we do involves monitoring the policies of governments, international financial institutions and multinationals. We fight a lot of legal cases against the government and companies through the local & supreme courts and we've won several.

In the last five years we have been focusing more on environmental campaigns, particularly relating to the construction of large dams either planned or under construction. We are actively involved in opposition to privatisation of all kinds. We are opposing Nepal joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). Nepal is the only country in South Asia that is not yet a member of the WTO. With groups in India, where the negative effects of the WTO are already visible, we are pushing a strong campaign to prevent Nepal joining. All in all our campaigns are mainly environmental campaigns, anti-dam campaigns, campaigns against privatisation.

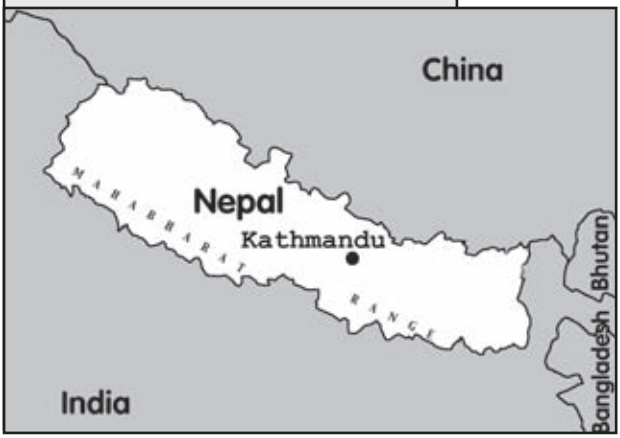
We have been filing a series of cases in the supreme court of Nepal against the construction of large dams, many of which we have a great possibility of winning. Last year we won a case against the privatisation (and sell off to Western companies) of the telecommunications sector. We also won the case against the Arun Three Hydro-Electric Dam five years back. We do a lot of networking with local movements. Wherever there are development projects and people who want to resist them we travel to the villages. We spend several days with the farmers



and help them define the issues and develop campaigns. We give them training and assist them in local actions, in acts of resistance, in building local movements. These are actions free from the influence of political parties, and free from any type of NGO (Non Governmental Organisation) influence. These are actions by victims and communities. Though we work with some NGOs at a national level we oppose the work of many who create allot of dependence, ignore the real issues and mislead the social movements.

Nepal in Brief

Ecology Nepal is a landlocked country in the Himalayas with three distinct geographical regions: the fertile, tropical plains of Terai, the central plateaus, covered with rainforest, and the Himalayan mountains, where the world's highest peaks are located. The climate varies according to altitude, from rainy and tropical, to cold in the high mountains. **Population** 22,021,000 (1996) of which only 10.6% are urban. **Agriculture** Over 80% of Nepal work in agriculture. Main crops are rice, sugarcane, tobacco, jute and cereals. Livestock is also important; sheep and buffalo. **Languages** Nepali is only spoken by half of the population, Tibetan is the second most common. Many speak one of a high diversity of ethnic languages. **Religion** Hinduism 86.2 %, Buddism 7.8 %, Muslim 3.8 %. Remainder consisting mainly of ethnic religions. **Capital** Kathmandu, 660,000 people. **The State** Parliament with a powerful and active monarchy, under control of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. Armed Forces, 35,000 (1994), Police 28,000.



We bring local people to Katmandu, we provide popular forums and we get them access to the media. The day after we have secured national media coverage we bring them to negotiate with the companies and the government. If that doesn't work we take legal action. Local direct action of many kinds is done also. It depends on the situation, and that is decided by the local people.

'Development is something done by outsiders, local people are never involved.'

Tell us about corporations and the process of development in Nepal?

All Nepal's development projects are financed by Western donors, or International NGOs or the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Local people are never informed or consulted about what will happen to them. The information is simply not there, never mind in local languages. Everything is dictated and imposed from the top. Development is something done by outsiders, local people are never involved.

There are hardly any Environmental Impact Assessments. There are some, but they are not effective or participatory. They are done by consultants in Katmandu to justify bad projects. Sometimes they have mitigation plans but again, they are not made with the involvement of the local people. Even if there are mitigation plans they lack funds.

There are problems of compensation & resettlement. Nepal is an agricultural country and it has no cash economy in rural areas. The displaced are given cash. They are given no help in finding themselves land and they become homeless in a few months. It's a big problem. In the future we will see hundreds of thousands displaced if the big dams we are opposing are built.

At the center of the struggle against big dams are the local people, particularly the indigenous peoples and ethnic groups. Their right to their culture and their traditional means of survival are not respected, they're forced to leave the land. So we fight the developments with the indigenous people. If the dam cannot be stopped then we fight for benefits for the local people. For drinking water, electricity, irrigation- whatever.

Nepal is under the structural readjustment of the World Bank and



International Monetary Fund (IMF). So Nepal is basically governed by the global financial institutions. They are preparing the ground for investment from multinational companies particularly in forestry and water resources. Nepal's water recourses are the second largest in the world after Brazil. Indian, US, & Norwegian corporations are coming in. The British government especially is pushing for privatisation and the opening up of Nepal to British companies.

In the past few years multinationals have been very active in Nepal in the production of junk food like crisps and soft drinks like coca cola. The majority of the population have no proper drinking water, but you find beer and alcohol all over the country, in any quantity. We are wasting more than half of our grain crop on the production of alcohol. That has led to severe poverty and malnourishment. So these are the kind of issues behind any development project that we are fighting.

What kind of struggles, actions and tactics are local people using to resist this development and their internalisation into the global economy?

Local people are still not very organized. In the past development has been defined as anything coming from outside with foreign money, foreign experts, foreign technology. It was seen as a positive thing, but increasingly no longer after a series of cases where local people have not benefitted but have been harmed. So now people are beginning to understand. What is lacking in them is information and strategy on how they can campaign, what legal tools can they use and what direct actions can they take. So for the past few years we have been focusing on training at local levels. Getting information, organizing training, preparing actions. Helping them understand their local struggles in the context of globalisation and the country as a whole. Giving them a more complete understanding of how this system works and why they are not benefitting. It is very difficult as most are illiterate and almost totally ignorant about what is happening outside of their area.

We have been exchanging farmer-activists from one part of the country to another. So different communities learn and get empowered by each other. This is very, very effective. These experienced activists prepare local people for action. Non-violent or sometimes violent. While we in Katmandu mobilise the media and fight the court cases in favor of the people resisting. If their struggle is related to a development project with the involvement of any foreign country or world bank, or IMF or ADB or multinationals we always try to find friends and groups and activists in those countries where these companies are based and together plan international campaigns. So we have been linking up and coordinating local direct actions with national level advocacy and international level campaigns.

Most of the readers of this magazine are people who are involved in campaigns, direct action and local struggles either in Britain or in Europe. They would be very interested to know what tactics people are using in Nepal on the ground on actions. For instance you mentioned some were non-violent and some were violent. Is it blockades, stopping work?

Well, mostly in the struggles that we have been involved with, local people have been stopping the operation of the Hydro-power projects, often for several days. Taking over buildings, preventing the officials and workers of the company getting into their offices and carrying out maintenance. They also divert the water from the turbine tunnels to their land. This stops the generation of electricity. They block roads, they prevent public transportation. They organize protests and demonstrations with slogans and banners on the street. They also embarrass government officials and political leaders who are in opposition to their struggles. These are the kind of activities at local levels.

What kind of numbers are involved in say the occupation of the Hydro-Electric Schemes?

Okay there is one case where we saw about 10,000 people mobilised using direct action to prevent the generation of electricity for several days. 10,000 people, for 24 hours and by rotation. It's like taking over. Taking over the entire complex. All the offices of the company. So its anything from hundreds to ten-thousands.

We do not get involved in actions when there is no consensus at the local level. We invest lots of time and energy first in convincing everyone that their fight is for everyone. It has nothing to do with any particular political party or ideology. So we avoid any confrontations or divisions among ourselves based on ideology and political manipulation. We are completely neutral in our actions. It doesn't matter who is in government, who is in power, we are critical of them.

Has the scale of direct action been growing in the last couple of years & what kind of numbers across the whole country?

We have been involved in about thirty local movements and actions all over the country. They are

related to the dams, the irrigation projects, drinking water, conservation areas. It's growing and people are taking local actions sometimes even without our knowledge, but based on what they have heard about our campaigns. So we have basically developed strategies that anyone can use. We have little brochures about it, which explain if there is a development what do you do? How do you meet? How do you form an action group. The *National Concerned Society* is a network of local action groups.

Anyone can participate and there is no need for funding from outside. We give our time free and rely on each others hospitality. When we are in the village they feed us and when they come to Katmandu we take care of their expenses. So there is no need of foreign money and there is a trust because they see we have no monetary interest. It is very important that we are not seen as an NGO. It is so hard for us to convince people we are not NGOs and doing it for money. NGOs have a very bad reputation

So we always say first fight for information. Fight for compensation. Decide what you want to get out of that project. What benefits and know about the conditionalties that are being imposed from outside. Ask the developers if there will be training for local people, if there is no employment then kick them out. Ask for land to land compensation- don't take money. So with these few campaign tips people are taking action all over the country. There can be no development project from now on without more and more education about all these issues of privatisation and globalisation of the economy. Without more battles in the courts. Without more actions, blockades, occupations. With every gain in a struggle the other communities become stronger through learning about it from the network. This is what we will be doing in the future.



Could you tell me about the reaction of the elite and the state to both your organisation and the demonstrations? Are those involved in direct action under threat?

Because of the kind of reputation we already have politicians blame us even if we are not directly involved. These people in government think that the people of Nepal have no clue about how to take actions and that we are the ones who do them. We are called anti-development, agents of Western environmentalists, sometimes dollar eaters- doing these things because someone is giving us money. There is a lot of character assassination in the media, all types of lies are told about us. Whenever we visit the communities and project sites they create local pro-corporate/government NGO's to confront us and harass local peoples. We have been physically attacked. Doing these sort of actions in Nepal is very risky, physically risky. Our network which tries to help these struggles is small and many of my past colleagues and friends, nearly all of them have joined NGO's- have become Project Consultants.

Have been assimilated into the System?

Yes, have been assimilated into the system, have become consultants, have become political party workers. Have become tools and the NGO's fund their election campaigns. We do not belong to any political parties and we are very critical of them all. We basically oppose the donors & we oppose foreign aid. We just say *No to Foreign Aid. It did not help and it will not help*. So we are very unpopular among the donors and among international financial institutions and Western governments that have money in Katmandu.

We are treated like enemies by political parties including the leftist political party. Last year for instance we were holding a meeting at the office. The police came to the office, seized all documents, and prevented the meeting. They arrested one of our campaigners under the Subversion Act, and put him



in jail for 11 days. Those who have been involved for many years are in danger. All over the country we have physical danger and risk. The police hate us for our exposes of human rights abuse particularly in relation to the Maoist insurgency. We are very critical of the government suppression of the Maoist's. It is carried out in a very oppressive way, repressing the innocent in the name of suppression of the Maoist movement. We are also of course critical of Maoists when they take actions against civilians. So we are fighting for the protection of civilians from both sides.

Could you tell us about the Nepalese political situtation surrounding the Maoist Insurgency?

Nepal restored the multi-party system in 1990 which was brought together by the Liberal and Communist parties. The Communist Parties also joined parliament. They secured seats as the opposition and when later the majority party government was dissolved by the president there was a call for another election but no-one got a majority. *The Communist Party of Nepal Unified Marxist-Leninist* formed the government- for 9 months. In 9 months they were totally co-opted. They followed everything which the US, IMF, ADB & World Bank told them to do. Now they are preparing to join the WTO. *'Oh yeah we will privatize everything. No problem we're preparing to become a member.'* So we have lost the strength and credibility of the left movement in this country. This is very unfortunate. The government are not delivering, health, economic reform, social justice.

In reaction to the increasing corruption and co-option of the Communist Party & the left movement and the NGOisation of social movements; the Maoists formed the *Communist Party of Nepal Maoist*, launching the underground movement. In their statements and actions they oppose multinationals. They oppose privatization. They oppose globalisation. They oppose big dams. They fight for land reforms, proclaiming that the only solution for Nepal is armed revolution.

The state response has been very brutal, very repressive. People are just killed, children are killed, women are raped, innocent people are murdered on the suspicion that they maybe Maoist sympathizers. The situation is that anybody could be killed any time by the police- civilians, activists, and people like us, on the ground that whatever we are doing we are supporting the Maoists. So it has become a serious game. If something is not done in the near future Nepal will end up in a full scale civil war- what we used to see in the 70's in the Philippines. We will see a militarized state like Pinochet in Chile in reaction to the Maoists. It will be very unfortunate. India is very involved in the conflict. It of course wants a pro-Indian government in place so it can take over the Nepali market for Indian multinationals. To take over Nepalís water recourses, to build large dams for the making of thousands of thousands of megawatts of electricity for the Indian market and industries. America too has interests in Nepal- with ENRON and other companies involved in big dam projects.

The US are already providing counter-insurgency training for the military and police and giving all sorts of assistance - including monetary assistance to suppress the Maoist movement. The suppression of the Maoists will also mean the suppression of all popular movements and critical opposition. They may be environmental activists, they may be human rights activists.They maybe those opposing privatization, globalisation and multinationals. I am not involved in the Maoist movement and looking at it from outside it is very difficult to see how the Maoists will create their revolution. I don't know how they are going to continue their struggles with no assistance from other countries and fighting an Indian & US backed enemy. Especially as they are the only ones carrying on in resistance a continuity of some kind of left, social, mass movement.

A friend who went to stay in Mexico said that the major effect of the Zapatistas was not the action



the armed group itself takes but the political space and opportunity they opened up for social movements. Has that been similar in Nepal?

Yes. Their struggle is also creating lots of social movements in other sectors. Women, Indigenous peoples, labor, students, intellectuals. So many other social fronts are being created in the past four years, that didn't exist at all before as movements.

How many people is it generally accepted are in the Maoist Insurgency?

It is presumed they have around five to six thousand. But they will grow. Unless the parties in power make big shifts in their policies and programs in addressing social and economic problems. Unless they stand against globalisation and privatisation these parties are just going to lose their credibility. The only alternative will be counter-movements.

This will be a rather long winded question I'm afraid. If it is possible that the Maoists succeed in either creating social revolution in the whole country or controlling significant territory, many of us in our movement would support that. However most of us come from an Anarchist position of being against the Nation state and having seen the Left win over and over again in these battles in the last hundred years, only to replicate the authoritarian principles of the organisations and classes they fought against. So to a certain extent that is why we have been so inspired by the Zapatista's because they have openly said that they do not want to conquer power, but to do away with the nation state and let local communities become autonomous. What is the Nepalese Maoist's position on local autonomy and the nation state?

Regarding their strategy for power, they are for the abolition of the monarchy and they are for a Republic of Nepal. With regards to local autonomy they have said that they will guarantee complete local autonomy for communities and ethnic and indigenous groups. Nepal is very diverse culturally and linguistically. So that is where the Maoists have a lot of attraction for people. Many indigenous peoples movements, and ethnic groups, support the Maoist movement and some have gone underground to join the insurgency. So the Maoist's strategy is that they take over the power and they give the power to the local indigenous populations at local levels. It has become very attractive—because much of the country's populations are fighting for local Autonomy, for a kind of right to self-determination.

The other worry I would have about much of the Left is that as well as copying the governmental institutions of capitalism they also accept almost uncritically Industrialisation. The whole process of the destruction of the living social fabric that keeps many societies together, and its replacement by very compartmentalized society. Do the Maoists in Nepal have a criticism of Industrialism and high levels of technology themselves?

Since I am not part of the Maoist movement I cannot speak with absolute accuracy. Given my reading of various political literature and newspaper stories I think they are not promoting and they do not believe in high technology, and industrialisation. Their main push has been for a radical land reform. In Nepal nearly 80% of the population are agricultural. Nepal is a very mountainous and hilly region, due to lack of transportation etc. it is simply not possible to industrialise the agricultural and forestry sectors. Their struggle is to basically preserve and manage what we already have and prevent the foreign capital and technology, and multinationals. They have a very clear position that when multinationals come and foreign technology and capital comes the western economic monopoly capitalism comes. They are very clear about it. Nepal can survive and would be better off without any industrialisation.





Given that the supposed Communist parties and organizations in power are not likely to capitulate to radical demands, serious civil war between the ruling elite on one side and the popular movements, and indigenous peoples through the Maoist Insurgency is very likely?

Yes, I have no inside knowledge from the Maoists or government but watching the political situation I think an immanent civil war situation is very likely. The king, the military, the police, the liberals and Leftist parties in the parliament are all opposed to the Maoist movement. The Maoist movement is challenging the whole existence of monarchy. It is challenging the political ideology of liberalism. Challenging the co-option of other leftist parties. So it is challenging nearly all the power structures. As a result the Maoists have a lot of enemies.These power structures are not going to be able to provide a solution to the basicproblems of the country. Even if there was no Maoist movement there would still be protests and demonstrations. People are going to be resisting in one way or another. This international financial system coming into Nepal, with privatisation and structural adjustment has to be fought. Noone is fighting from within the Nepalese Power structures. So there will be resistance, there will be struggles and presently the Maoists are leading it. There will be sever confrontation. I don't see any possibility of compromise between the two sides.

What do you think activists and radicals in the west can do to support the popular movements and anti- development struggles in Nepal.

One is exposing Nepalese human rights violations in your media. Secondly, on anti-development activities it would be helpful for solidarity actions to be taken in the West, on companies involved. For stories from the Nepalese resistance to be told at demonstrations, in the media. You are not in a position to hear so much about Nepal. For although it is a small country, so many good things are happening in terms of social movements, anti-dam, anti-development actions. The whole society is in a big transition from feudalism towards radical movements. So I think it's basically letting the world know what is going on in Nepal, with the multinational manipulation, with bad development, and growing social movements.

For more information on anti-development struggles in Nepal contact:

INHURED International P.O.Box 2125, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel/fax: 0977-1-429741

A note from the interviewer

Some readers may object to us covering the Maoist insurgency in Nepal. Objections will come from both anarchists and pacifists. Pacifists will object to us covering a violent armed movement. When facing off repressive elites, if you want to remain effective or for that point alive, pacifism is simply not an option. See the review of *Pacifism as Pathology* on page XXX. More interesting is the likely criticism from anarchists who have a tendency to be very suspicious of any non-anarchist political movements. This is quite sensible; most political movements of the last hundred years have been authoritarian. This is not just some quasi-moralistic position, in practical terms it has meant libertarians time after time being repressed and murdered by the Left. In Russia, Trotsky said of anarchists "we shall shoot them like partridges" and made good on his promise. Anarchists were shot and imprisoned in their hundreds by the socialist/republican government during the spanish civil war in 1936. Ho Chi Minh ruthlessly crushed the workers councils in Vietnam.. I could go on.

Anarchy then as well as a history of rebellion and dreams is a history of defeat. (Though I suppose I prefer being from a social movement of the massacred rather than the massacerers). Suspicion of non-anarchist social movements then is sensible. Unfortunately this can result in some First World activists taking a holier-than-though attitude to many Third World movements. This is unbelievably arrogant. These movements consist of millions of brave, hope filled, heavily oppressed revolutionaries. Finding out about these movements can knock us out of our complacency and we can learn allot from them. Often their ideas are not as far away from ours as you'd think.

The accelerating global collapse of Leftism has led many movements to reject authoritarian ways of organising. Others start off authoritarian and change, some after a process of self examination like the Nigerian Trotskyites—who became the anarchist Awareness League, some as a result of the involvement of indigenous people. When they first went to the hills the necleus of the Zapatistas were Maoists—but they changed when confronted by the Indigenous peoples non-hierarchical, collective way of organising. Most revolutionaries have never even heard of anarchism. Some Palastinian fighters after meeting Israeli anarchists for the first time remarked how sensible it sounded and went on to form their own group. As a result of the present downturn in class struggle in most of w.Europe we live in a political comfort zone. We are rarely jailed, even rarer killed. We can print pamphlets and argue about the minutia untill the cows come home. Others are busy fighting revolutions and trying to stay alive. In most countries access to the experience and ideas of generations of anarchists and the revolutions they fought is simply not available. This knowledge would be invaluable to revolutionaries in the rest of the world. It remains for the most on the shelves of cosy little anarcho bookshops, it's a long way from Whitechapel to Nepal. There is an urgent need for discussion and solidarity between all radical social movements. Thankfully we are seeing this happen. We can all learn a lot from each other.

A Look at Eastern Europe
From Rioting Farmers to Rabid Fascists

Here's a roundup of news from those countries that make up Eastern Europe. It's not comprehensive, but it is an insight into the range of activity going on. These regions have a rich history of direct action, from the Green Armies in Russia (radical ecological peasants who continued to resist the Bolsheivek counter-revolution throughout the 1930s) to the uprisings that destabilised the Soviet control of Hungary in 1956 and later, in 1989, in the whole of Eastern Europe.

Nuclear Haven

Dodgy leaking nuclear reactors—yep it's true, they're all over Eastern Europe and more and more are being built. The programmes are facing resistance as well, though. There are campaigns against the construction of two new nuclear reactors in the Ukraine, against uranium mining in Karelia (a republic within the Russian federation), and against regular high level nuclear waste transports from Bulgaria to the Mayak reprocessing facility in Russia, where a tank full of radioactive waste exploded in 1957. Protest camps have been set up, for example near the Mohobze nuclear power plant in Slovakia and on the planned construction site of a Minotaur nuclear power plant in Northern Russia.

The beginning of March saw an anti-nuclear conference in Voronezh, Russia. It was organised by the local group 'Green Arrow' and the joint anti-nuclear campaign of Ecodefense! and the Socio-Ecological Union, a large umbrella organisation in Eurasia. International days of action against plutonium fuel were planned and an action carried out against the construction of a new nuclear heating plant in Voronezh, where a few people, including a journalist, were arrested. Email: ecodefense@glasnet.ru

Happy Polish Wolves

Wolves are now fully protected in Poland. Following an action in Krosno and a campaign by the 'Workshop for All Beings'-group for their protection, the government banned the hunting of wolves in all areas of Poland which had been legal in three Polish Voivoidships. The campaign is still facing pressure from the hunting community, however. Now the 'Workshop for All Beings' are focusing more on protecting the habitats of wolves.

One of the larger campaigns at present is against the proposal that was submitted to have Zakopane, Poland host the 2006 Winter Olympic Games. If Zakopane is granted the Olympics, many of the events will be held in Tatra National Park, Poland's most unique and valuable national park and the only alpine ecosystem in the whole of Central and Eastern Europe. Large scale ecological and cultural destruction would be the inevitable result. The campaign is going well, with many letters and press releases circulating, coverage in the press, television and radio, as well as growing international support.



Rioting Farmers in Poland

A proposed gas pipeline from the Yamal peninsula has aroused the anger of local farmers. A battle between 50 farmers and 30 police was reported as happening the beginning of May. One farmer attacked the cops with a tractor armed with some machinery, while the rest charged with scythes. The police, shooting with rubber bullets, injured the tractor driver.

A demonstration drew 10,000 farmers and, according to an email, apparently also some philosophy students who carried a banner demanding more state intervention on the empty beer bottles market.

A Russian Pyromaniac

Across the world the rich love their wilderness. After a hard weeks exploiting the poor and the planet, an exhausted toff needs the peace and quiet of a country retreat to relax in. Preferably a mansion a long way away from those who have to live with the fruit of their enterprise. Russian capitalists have the same tastes, calling their country retreats 'dachas'. Along comes Alexander Pushkin, a 21 year old from Yoroslavl, 100 miles north of Moscow. He's managed to burn down 25 dachas since 1997. This has made him a folk hero in Russia—a Robin Hood with a lighter.

Alexander slipped into the houses during the week when their owners were out wheeling and dealing, and, after clearing out the larder, he would burn the

house down. In Russia they have less illusions about private enterprise; capitalism's reality is laid bare. So Alexander's activities have touched a nerve. He's been committed to an asylum and Yeltsin told the Russian people that 'some of the houses burnt belonged to people who weren't so wealthy'. Alexander knows what he's done. He told police, "My crime was a conscious revenge against the rich." His 'victims' include a banker, an oil company director and an ex-head of the local KGB.

Militant Miners and Mill Workers in Russia

It's common that Russian coal miners and other industrial workers just don't get paid for months. They have to resort to strikes, occupations and hunger strikes to get their earnings. Recently, militant action has been on the increase. Managers have been taken hostage and miners from north of the Arctic circle travelled to Moscow to camp outside parliament, for example, until they got paid. A common tactic is the blockading of railway lines. Last May and again in July, protesting miners severed all transport links between eastern and western Russia by blockading the Trans-Siberian railway. Hundreds of other workers including teachers and nurses joined in. Pensioners brought food and drink to the blockades. The authorities have been threatening to clear the various blockades, which are costing business dearly, by force. But they fear the popular backlash and it's remained mere threats. A state of emergency was declared when on the far eastern island of Sakhalin, miners stopped the delivery of coal to the power station causing daily blackouts, but the riot police sent there did not dare intervene.



The miners have managed to cast off the shackles of the official and also independent trade unions that wouldn't support their strike action, and continue fighting their exploitation independently.

On July 9 1999, 80 masked, uniformed gunmen accompanied by various officials tried to storm the Vyborg Pulp and Paper Mill in Sovietsky near the Russian-Finnish border. The mill had been under workers' control for the past 18 months. The workers used the mill's alarm system to mobilise local support to fight back. The ensuing battles were fierce and two workers were seriously injured.

The mill was bankrupted in 1996, a common fate for factories in Russia today, where companies are allowed to run to the ground, then be stripped of assets and auctioned at a low price. At that point, the workers seized control and began running the production themselves. The solidarity they received from other workers' organisations and the local communities sustained them. In the meantime, the mill was sold to a company called Alcem UK Ltd.

At the Yasnagorsk machine plant, the workers also took control of their factory, shared their profits and fed the town. The occupation has now resulted in nearly all the demands of the workers being met.

For more information, contact International Solidarity with Workers in Russia, Email :antek@aol.com

Bialowieza Forest

'Workshop for All Beings' have campaigned since 1994 for the protection of the primeval Bialowieza Forest. This area covers 1470 square kilometres on the Belarussian-Polish border, is home to bison and wolves and has seen mass timber exploitation. The aim is to secure national park status for the whole area. International support, e.g. demonstrations in front of Polish embassies and local actions and activities first resulted in a moratorium on the logging of old deciduous trees in 1995, then in a government move to double the size of the National Park (from 10% of the woodland to 20%). The campaign continues. Contact: Workshop for All Beings, PO Box 40, 43-304 Bielsko-Biala 4, Poland.



Victorious Prague Squat

A disused building called 'Milada' was squatted by anarchists last May and opened as a social centre. The owner had actually granted the occupants permission, but was pressured by the police in a clampdown after last year's global street party in Prague. So an eviction did come, with lots of police and private security, but the squatters had barricaded themselves onto the roof. They stayed for five days, while security surrounded Milada to prevent people going in. The occupants were supported by friends—some camping outside the building—who fought with the security to get food onto the roof. After a large demonstration, people finally managed to gain entrance to the squat, the police backed off and it seems as if Milada is here to stay.

Poacher-Battling in the National Park of Samarskaya Luka

"On July 22 1999, four activists from the radical environmental movement Rainbow Keepers and two Dutch journalists headed off for another action to take off the locks from the tubes of the poachers' dams on the territory of the national park. It was decided to go to Orekhovskaya dam, where we had already taken off the lock on July 17, but it was put back by poachers. We also planned to try to find out the location of a distant dam, which we wanted to tear down at our future actions. When we came to Orekhovskaya dam and started taking off the lock, we were stopped by the park ranger and his son, who ran up to the dam. Four people ended up being taken away by the police for, as they said, their identification, even though all but one of them had their documents on them. During the interrogation one of those arrested, Anatoliy Dorovskikh, was beaten by the policeman. A blow to the ear broke his tympanis membrane, and he had to have surgery to recover. Now Anatoliy is at one of the city hospitals. Three activists were set free after a report was drawn up, but Anatoliy was forced to remain at the station as the cops said he struggled with them when being arrested, though there are a lot of witnesses that he didn't. The police promised to keep him at the station all night and to take him to the court the next morning. Immediately, we informed the mass media about what had happened, and after numerous calls from journalists Anatoliy was freed. The case was dropped."

This was all part of two weeks of actions based around a protest camp against the problem of poachers' dams in the territory of the national park.



Spooky-eyed Hitler worshipper, president Lukashenko of Belarus.

Belarus

This small state with the capital city Minsk is run by an autocratic government headed by President Lukashenko. He speaks openly of Hitler as his role model and repression of resistance in Belarus is harsh. Meetings, gigs and gatherings are forced underground. Nevertheless, there has been anti-nuclear campaigning. Belarussian ex-nuclear scientists have been linking up with grassroots activists, and the summer of 1998 saw a sustained campaign to raise awareness about the planned construction of new nuclear power plants and the contamination already in Belarussian soil—Minsk is only 200km away from Chernobyl.

Critical Mass in Gdansk

The 21st of March is the first day of spring, on which the tradition is upheld in Poland of burning a 'marzanna', a puppet symbolizing winter. A Critical Mass gathered and rode through one of Gdansk's main streets demanding bicycle lanes there. The 250-300 cyclists went to the sea where they burned their 'marzanna'—cellar doors, under the slogan 'Liberate your bikes from the cellars and garages!' Similiar actions took place on the same day in Poznan and Warsaw.

Letter from Romania

"You asked me to tell you what is happening here. Well, I work for a consulting firm that provides services to multinationals and I can assure you they are seriously trashing this place. There is a huge roads programme underway, funded by the EU. Mind you, the Communist governments totally fucked up most of the environment already and people's living conditions leave plenty to be desired. We have Copsa



Mica, designated the most polluted town in Europe. The big tobacco companies are huge here, with factories and the lot. Needless to say that the big agrochem corporations are heavily pushing their wares resulting in contamination of the groundwater, which used to be just a localised problem. There is zero waste management in Romania, in Bucharest, most rubbish is just tipped by the roadside—nice! We have just had elections for Mayor of Bucharest and due to all candidates being incompetent and corrupted, the electorate simply didn't bother to vote, there was a 34% turrnout. There's lots to be done."

South Russian Road Building

The Socio-Ecological Union of the Northwest Caucausus have initiated a campaign to protect the Caucasian biosphere Zapovednik. The road 'Lagonaky and Dagomys' planned by the Adugeya Republic authorities and the Russian Federation Road Service will go through its territory, which will irreparably damage a unique nature system. The campaign is supported by locals, and actions were taken in March 1999 as part of a European Transport Action Day held by ASEED. Other actions and demonstrations have followed.

Punks For Street Drinking

The anarcho-punk squat centre 'Rozbrat' in Poznan held a banquet in the town centre in April. This consisted of elegant tables set up with lots of alcohol as a demonstration against the ban on street drinking. To quote a source "They had a big time until the police smashed it." This resulted in the squat being raided as well. Contact: PO Box 5, 60-066 Poznan, Poland

Support Michal Patera

Last November, a club in Prague was attacked by fascists. This was the second attack in six months on Michal Patera, who defended himself and shot a nazi leader with his legally held pistol. None of the fascists were charged, but Michal was arrested later. It's worth noting that in the Czech Republic, more than a third of the police force are amongst the estimated 30,000 organised fascists in the country.

Much needed national and international support was rallied and recently, Michal has been released on bail. He is still facing up to 15 years in prison, though. Money is needed to help pay his solicitor, and a few quid can make quite a difference in Czech. Send donations to Solidarity Federation, PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE. Write to Michal c/o FSA-IWA, Box 5, 15006, Praha 56, Czech Republic.

Harassment in the Ukraine

Last year, Kiev was to host a European Bank summit for regional development, and intended to 'clean up the city' for the visiting dignitaries. Ex-KGB men in their new guise as the Ukrainian Secret Services began harassing and intimidating the anarchist group 'Tigra Negra' and the radical ecological group 'Rainbow Keepers'. These two groups announced a demonstration for March 5 1998, but were then burgled, raided, had equipment confiscated as well as being threatened with expulsion from university, work etc. Random arrests and searches followed, too.

The Rainbow Keepers have been active for years, liberating animals and occupying offices amongst other activities. See page XXX for the contact address.

Polish Anti-Road Protests



Joining NATO and the EU has forced Poland into adopting other EU countries' destructive road building practices. The construction of the A4 and other motorways, part of the Trans European Network (TEN), has faced much opposition. The A4 motorway will cut through the nature reserves of the landscape park Mount St. Anna. Demonstrations and letters of protest to the ministries remained unanswered, so protest camps were established in April 1998. On another occasion, houses were squatted along the route near Poznan. It kicked off at the eviction (see picture), with squatters battling the private security drafted in by the German contractors, and the houses being demolished while squatters were still on the roofs. For further information contact: Ziemia Przede Wszystkim (Earth First!—Wielkopolska), Skr. Pocz. 63, 60-966 Poznan 31, Poland, E-mail: poznan@fz.most.org.pl or 'Workshop For All Beings'



Mayday in Prague

Rumour was that fascists were planning to attack anarchists and other antifascists in Prague on the 1st of May this year. On the day, the fascists managed to hold a legal demonstration, gathering at the 'Strelecky Island' in the town centre, the traditional anarchists' meeting point on Mayday. Banners proclaimed 'Smash the Reds' as their motto and skinheads shouted "Bohemia for the Czechs". The demo was to start at 11am, but was delayed by a blockade of anarchists, which was charged by the police. The fascists marched under police protection, while 21 anarchists were arrested and the rest were tear gassed and charged by horses. Molotov cocktails and bottles were thrown at the police, and two police cars were damaged. Contact: Zeme Predevsim (EF!), PO Box 237, 160 41 Praha 6, Czech Republic

WOLF Forest Protection Movement

This network of independent groups was founded in 1993 in Slovakia. They are primarily concerned with the protection of the much abused and exploited forests in the country. They have saved the forests of Oblik Hill in the Slanske Muntains with direct action and have planted thousands of native species of trees and shrubs in degraded forests.

In 1997, they began monitoring forestry practices in the Protected Landscape Area Polana, a biosphere reserve, where 234 clearcuts were planned or already in progress. Treesits and site blockades followed in June last year, preventing logging. These occupations were met with police harassment including aerial infra-red monitoring. A demonstration was held in front of the Minstry for Land Management, meetings were held with the Ministry and other blockades and actions took place, including the barricading of the forest roads to prevent journalists coming too close to the camp. Emails were sent from around the world mounting the pressure on the Ministry and press coverage was huge. The occupation ended in late July, but the activists continued monitoring the area. They discovered that logging had been moved to a different site, so the Polana Biosphere Reserve is saved at present.

Slovakian wildlife is also threatened by Slovakia's candidacy for the Winter Olympics in 2006 which would result in the construction of sports facilities and increased tourism. Actions have aimed to disrupt the planned clearcut logging in two Slovakian national parks. An action targeted the opening of the World Winter Universiade in the High Tatras National Park (see picture).

Another project which is also running well is the creation of a private forest reserve in Slovakia. WOLF are trying to raise the money to buy 21 hectares of natural beech-fir forest in the Cergov mountains before it is cut. A donation of £20 will buy you a tree! Donations are still needed. For further information contact: WOLF, 082 13 Tulcik 27, Slovakia, Email: wolf@vadium.sk

The Only Good Fascist is a Dead One

We received the following email from Poland: "New Year's Update: We went in a small group to a place where about 30 nazis and football fans have their feast. There was a heavy fight—there were chains, bricks, fists, sticks and bats in use. Our casualties: one heavy wounded in hospital, two others heavily beaten, 5 lightly wounded. Their casualties: for sure bigger, direct hits with bricks in head, some in hospital—one pulled in my house, death! Massacre, that's all."

If you've got access to email, you can subscribe to the Alternative Eastern European Mailing list by sending a message to alter-ee@lyris.most.org.pl



Direct Action in Israel
Impressions from a Roving EF!er



Wherever you go there are some things that never change. When I arrived in Israel the elections were at fever pitch, politicians were up on charges of corruption and greed and the Israeli army was still fighting in South Lebanon. But on the positive side, Israeli environmental group Green Action had organised a three day Earth First!-style gathering in the Jerusalem forest.

The gathering took place between the 8th and 10th of April '99 and was the first event of its kind in Israel, and they pulled it off with true style. Based in Tel-Aviv, Green Action is a grassroots collective of people who are more or less constantly highlighting, or taking action against environmental damage in Israel. Talking to a few members I learned that Green Action has been going for a number of years, but that over the last couple of years direct action has been more and more on the agenda. One member said: "this has been a natural progression for us to tackling a situation where our words fall on deaf ears."

The gathering was significant in that a large part of the forest is being threatened by a massive road scheme. Road 16 is going to be 100 metres wide, connecting the existing Tel-Aviv-Jerusalem road to West Jerusalem. And as if that were not enough, the forest is also threatened by the now-confirmed West Jerusalem Bypass, encroachment from developing towns and an expanding oil refinery. A lot of damage for a delicate forest which is home to rare flora and creatures such as hyenas, jackals, porcupines, gazelles and various birds of prey.

The gathering was a good sign that people are not into sitting back and letting their garden be destroyed. By the Saturday, when things had really got going, nearly 200 people had got together on top of this beautiful valley in amongst pines, olives trees and bushes growing over old stone wall ruins.

The various workshops were excellent with a lot of information and knowledge being shared. Things were a bit difficult for me to understand, being as they were all in Hebrew, but translators were there to help. There were talks about globalisation, the 'green consumer trap', the animal rights movement in Israel (which has been going for some years now), as well as practical workshops on recycling, permaculture and climbing. There were also walks around the endangered area to see the rare flora and fauna. On top of that, an Israeli living on protest sites in England discussed direct action in the form of eco-protest sites and why the time is right to follow this direction in Israel as well.

Having been involved with protests in England, it was great to see the same spirit of resistance in these people. Sitting around the fire pit for the communal



meals, you could feel a real unity between everyone—Tel-Aviv punks chatting to Jerusalem professors. There was a lot of entertainment over the three days, supplied by the 'Caravan Crew', a group of characters from all over the world who had just walked from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea to bring about peace in the Middle East, doing their own style of magic and healing along the way. Them being there made the whole event like a Rainbow Gathering as well as an Earth First! one.

The weekend was a real success and managed to include a vast variety of people from all spectrums of society. One man said: "We hope this gathering will be a step towards more anti-road actions and protesting in Israel. Who knows, we might see the first protest site in the 'Holy Land' before the end of the millennium."

Road 80

Travelling south from Jerusalem you come to the Judea desert. This mountainous region contains many water springs surrounded by incredible wildlife. The area is home to leopards, desert foxes, ibex and hyrax. I managed to trek through some of the nature trails in this area, and saw first hand how beautiful the waterfalls and green valleys are amongst this great desert.

Like the Jerusalem forest, this area has its own problem—Road 80. This proposed road scheme will destroy the upper part of two amazing rivers. The interesting point to the Road 80 proposal is the fact that this road is purely politically motivated, being part of the peace agreement with the Palestinians. In addition, the road would be used for arms movements in the event of a war with Syria. Blatantly a new road is not needed in an area with hardly any through traffic. Such is the fucked-up world of politics…

There is a strong campaign against Road 80 as it is symptomatic of all the environmental damage happening in Israel. The opposition comes from religious and archaeological groups as well as ecologists, since the proposed area is around where the Dead Sea scrolls were found. The campaign has gone as far as the occupation of land opposite the front drive of Arik Sharon's estate. As well as being the man behind Road 80, Sharon was also responsible for the war in Lebanon in '82. If you're looking for a true bastard in the Middle East, he takes the first prize. The occupation was a good show of resistance considering there were only a few people there. It lasted less than 2 weeks, but it was during the run-up to the elections in which Sharon is publicly involved, so I imagine it got right on his nerves—ha ha!

Action!

Over the next year all who are concerned have really got their work cut out, with many road schemes and major developments planned. For example, the Cross-Israel Highway—a monstrous road connecting the north to the south of the country. Financed and built by Africa-Israel co. and Canadian Highways, this will rampage through woodlands, deserts and even villages. Considering Israel is a small country, this will have a massive impact. It's ironic that for so many years the religious and political leaders of this country have fought to preserve their 'Holy Land' at any cost, and now by their own deeds they are destroying it.

In the last year Israel has witnessed the occupation of cranes in protest against shoreline development, land and cave occupations on the route of the Cross-Israel Highway, and more… The times are calling for people to stand up and be counted. Hopefully we'll be hearing about a lot more action in Israel over the next few months.

Contact: Green Action , PO Box 4611, Tel-Aviv, Zip Code 65161, Israel, Phone/Fax: +972 (0) 3 516 2349
Email: greenman@shani.net
Web: www.greenaction.org.il



Part of the area to be destroyed by Road 80



Anarchy in Israel

The anarchist movement in Israel is older than the state of Israel itself. There is a very strong historical tradition of Jewish and Yiddish anarchism both in Europe and in Palestine—for example, the early communitarian movement in Palestine was inspired by Jewish anarchists like Gustav Landauer and Rudolph Rocker who worked with the Yiddish-speaking sweatshop labourers of London's East End. Some of the early communards in Palestine resisted the demand for a Jewish state and sought cooperation with the Arabs.

For about 30 years from 1967 the old guard of Israeli anarchists published a newspaper in Yiddish and Hebrew. Some more counter-culture oriented groups emerged in the '60s and '70s. There was an anarchist group in Israel in '67 during the Yom Kippur War called 'Black Front' who were similar to the Yippies in America—the politics of pot and youth rebellion. They had a paper called 'Freaky' which was one of the only voices against the war at the time—they were very isolated from the rest of Israeli political culture.

A 'third wave' of Israeli anarchism emerged in the 1980s, inspired by the punk movement, which had little connection to earlier Israeli anarchists. At the time of the Palestinian Intifada in '87/'88, there was a big explosion of radical left activity in Israel. There was a pacifist group of anarcho-punks called Pacifist Youth—some of these went on to found the Israeli Anarchist Federation around the time of the Gulf War in '90/'91. The Israeli Anarchist Federation (IAF) held demonstrations against police brutality, against McDonalds and for animal rights, vegetarianism and environmental campaigns, among other things. It put on benefits and concerts and produced political zines and papers. The IAF was more or less the first organised group trying to put across anarchist ideas in Israel—they were often initiating campaigns that other left-wing groups weren't doing.

One anecdote illustrates the sort of political climate the IAF was functioning in—when they did a demonstration outside the first McDonalds to be opened in Israel, most people thought it was because McDonalds isn't kosher! The Federation got quite a lot of media attention, including the front pages of several newspapers, mainly due however, to their novelty value for the media. Unfortunately they also got quite a lot of attention from the police, suffering harrassment and intimidation by the secret police, who also attempted to infiltrate the organisation.

A lot of the issues that concern anarchists elsewhere in the world are more immediate and real for Israelis—for example all Israelis have to join the army at the age of 18 for 3 years. Punks and anarchists in Israel have tried to encourage teenagers to refuse military service, but it's hard to avoid it. It has been suggested that being frank about anarchist or anti-militarist views might give them the excuse they need not to draft you, but basically the only valid excuse, for a man at least, is to be declared mentally ill—you have to pretend to be crazy or else go to prison. One Israeli anarchist said:

> "Anywhere else you can make a zine against the army and it probably won't have much effect. Here you'll have mainstream politicians talking about wanting to lynch us, that we should be interrogated by the police, that we should be put on trial, that we should be put away because we're a menace to society."

This zine, which contained practical suggestions on how to escape military service, got on to the front pages of the newspapers and its authors were asked to appear on TV chat shows etc.—offers they declined. Despite the penalties they face, many young punks and anarchists are now refusing to go into the army.

The IAF organised meetings with Palestinians on the West Bank. The anarchists engaged with the Palestinians they supported; they didn't force their politics on anyone, but nevertheless an anarchist perspective was influential—the idea was completely new to the Palestinians. No-one else had ever expressed an anti-state point of view before—all the leftist and Maoist groups had all been arguing about what sort of 'workers state' they wanted.

Although the IAF has now disbanded, its legacy continues. Avi, a former member of the IAF relates:

> "What was interesting is that at some stage, we received a letter from a group of Arabs from a big Arab city inside Israel. They were all members of the Communist Party Youth. And they sent a letter saying that they're completely overwhelmed by the anarchist concept, that they never thought of that before and they wanted to convert as a group to the anarchist movement."

Sources:

Profane Existence 37 (1998); Peter Marshall—*Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (London, Fontana, 1993)



The Israeli Embassy Bombing and the Secret State

On the 26th of July 1994 two car bombs exploded in London outside the Israeli Embassy and a Zionist office—19 people were injured. In the subsequent crackdown many Palestinian activists were raided resulting in two, Jawad Botmeh and Samar Alami, being convicted of conspiracy to cause explosions. They were sentenced to 20 years in prison after which they face deportation back to Israel. They were set up.

Both were born into the struggle against the Israeli occupation. Jawad grew up near Bethlehem. Whilst living there beatings, detention without trial, torture, the destruction of homes by Israeli soldiers and other forms of collective punishment were common. One of his cousins was shot dead getting off a bus on the way to university. Another cousin was shot dead during the Intifada. While studying in Britain they were heavily involved in student politics and in the hope that they could help their communities back in the occupied territories they experimented with explosives. They hoped to send back information concerning the improvisation of basic explosives from household products. This was used to link them to the bombings despite their experiments being abject failures rather than military-style operations like the bombings.

Neither Jawad or Samar could be convicted of the bombings themselves, as they had fully corroborated alibis, both being at college at the time. Instead they were jailed with a catch-all conspiracy charge. They say they were embroiled in the conspiracy without their knowledge by the bomber, who police admit has never been caught. A year after their conviction, the ex-MI5 agent David Shayler leaked the information that MI5 had been warned about the bomb well in advance by an 'impeccable source'. It was later revealed that a senior MI5 manager believes that the bombings were carried out by the Israelis themselves to get British forces to crack down on Palestinians living and campaigning in Britain. This is more likely than it sounds. Such secret state tactics are quite common as part of what is known as a 'strategy of tension'. Attacks organised by the state itself are blamed on radicals, creating the political environment conducive to their suppression. The Israeli secret service, MOSSAD, has a long history of activity in Western Europe—including many kidnappings and assassinations. In 1987 its official British offices were closed down after MOSSAD agents killed Naji-El-Ali, a Palestinian cartoonist living in London. All along MI5 has used Public Immunity Certificates (like the ones used in the *Green Anarchist* trial—see *DoD* no. 7 p. 129) to hide what it knows about the bombings. Despite being given the right to appeal in May, Samar and Jawad are still fighting for MI5 to release its documents. This, according to the prisoners solicitor, whose previous cases include the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six, is a blatant cover up. You can write to Samar and Jawad at:

Samar Alami, RL 1436, H Wing, HMP Durham, Old Elvet, Durham, DH1 3HU

Jawad Botmeh, EP 3888, HMP Frankland, PO BOX 40, Frankland, Brasside, Durham, DH1 5YD

There will be regular demonstrations outside court during the appeal. To find out more or to get a copy of the pamphlet 'Justice Denied: Unanswered Questions in the case of the Israeli Embassy & Balfour House Bombings' (55 pgs) send £1.50 to:

Freedom and Justice for Samar and Jawad
BM FOSA, LONDON, WCIN 3XX, UK.
E-mail: postmaster@freesaj.org.uk
Website: www.freesaj.org.uk



Mamberamo Madness
Progress and Resistance in West Papua



Taiyai Warriors prepare to meet the West

The Mamberano basin, in the part of the world violently and forcibly occupied by the state of Indonesia, runs through some of the most beautiful and diverse forest regions on Earth. A huge river system ecompassing part of the central mountains of New Guinea, through lowlands and marshes to the coast, it covers an area over half the size of Britain. Its wild life includes crocodiles, tree kangaroos, cassowarys and birds of paradise, as well as many thousands of forest people, some of whom are still uncontacted by our culture.

Unfortunately, there are some greedy outsiders who have their eyes on this beautiful place, and they are too powerful for the people there to defend against without help. As usual, civilisation is running out of things to consume and is looking to strip out the more remote regions hitherto left mostly unscathed. A new development project centres on a complex of hydro-electric dams, which will be used as the backbone of a whole bunch of heavy industry and agriculture.

A copper smelter, probably run by PT Freeport Indonesia, is planned to process ore from other areas invaded by Indonesia. This will in turn spawn by-products and downstream industries (no pun intended). For example, a nickel processing plant which can utilize the electric power, hydrogen and CO2 available in Mamberamo for electrolysis, would use sulphuric acid, a by-product of the copper industry. The presence of the nickel industry in the area can in turn facilitate the development of a stainless steel industry. Iron ore from surrounding areas and perhaps Australia can be processed using the abundant electricity.

The looniest idea of all is to use the electricity to split water into hydrogen and oxygen to make fuel for things like 'green' cars, proposed by fake green organisations. The hydrogen and oxygen are brought back together to make electricity and water, giving the illusion of a problem-free energy supply by moving the problem further away from the consumer. (Proponents of 'alternative energy' are not very good at saying where this energy will come from, preferring to make vague references to glorious future technologies that will arrive in time. If you want a good laugh, try and find out what zero point energy is—it's a good example of 'alternative energy' fantasies. The reality is projects like this one.)

While the upstream area will be used for dams, industrial agriculture and tree monocultures a few token 'protected' areas will provide jobs to buy off potential opposition from NGOs and Bellamyesque enviromentalists (not to mention eco tourism—oh, I just did). Industrial estates and new settlements downstream will need a massive support infrastructure too. 10,000 years of development will happen within a single decade, with roads, bridges, ports.

industrial 'accidents'… all the things we are familiar with in the developed world.

The mountainous region to the south of the Mamberamo basin is rich in minerals, including gold, copper, bauxite and nickel. A copper smelter in the project area would process copper from the infamous US/British owned Freeport mine. Power for smelting could also make the mining of other nickel deposits feasible, such as Gag, Waigo and the cyclops area. It's an economist's wet dream.

Dreams

The notion of building large dams and industrial complexes in such a geologically unstable zone is extremely irresponsible, even within it's own warped reasoning. In Febuary 1996, the island of Biak was hit by an earthquake measuring 7.0 on the richter scale. Another, registering 4.6, struck Mamberamo and Jayapura in Septemember 1997.

Mamberamo is also being promoted as a future food supply centre of national importance, with possibly a million hectares set aside for rice cultivation to be irrigated from the dam scheme. Like a previous disastrous mega-project in Central Kalimantan, this is packaged as part of the strategy to salvage the country's self-sufficiency in rice.



There are plans to move about 300,000 people from the western ports of Indonesia to the area to provide the workforce for the agricultural projects. The village of Kasonaweja, capital of Central Mamberamo sub-district, will be the site of the shipping terminal, warehouses, offices and a trade centre.

The Mamberamo development is part of the rush to develop the eastern part of the occupied areas and fill them with huge numbers of Indonesians to make it harder to justify claims for independence. The Indonesian state needs to be able to turn the natural wealth of the area into power to keep itself propped up over the coming years.

The occupying regime's attempts to impose a modern economy throughout the outer islands has brought poverty, social conflict and ecological damage, nowhere more so than in West Papua. The massive transmigration schemes plus logging, plantation and mining concessions have deprived local populations of their traditional land and thus destroyed their way of life.

Under Construction

Reports from the region state that the process of land appropriation has already begun, with the invaders using bribery, threats and trickery against the local people. The occcupying president, Habibie, is due to announce this project in August this year. The whole project is shrouded in secrecy; information about who is involved is extremely hard to come by, though a DoD contact visited the region almost a year ago and said that some construction had already started, ahead of any permissions or approvals.

In 1997 the governor of Irian Jaya (that's what Indonesia calls West Papua) said his office would mobilise local people's support for the project. However, the majority have not been informed, let alone consulted about the mega-project plans. A representative of the people there went to the United Nations Indigenous People's Conference in Geneva in July this year, but was not permitted to speak by the white westerners running it.

Six thousand people living near the river will be moved from their forest home to a new town, with the descent into squalour, alcoholism and prostitution that inevitably accompanies such forced relocations. In the soon-to-be-industrial zone, the seeds of a new shanty town are now being sown; accomodation for around 3,000 people is already under construction near the mouth of the Mamberamo river. In





April 1997 an official seminar and workshop on the mega-project was attended by private companies from Germany, the Netherlands, France and Japan as well as Indonesia. In February this year Barnabas Suebu, a former governor of Irian Jaya, announced that Germany, Japan and Australia had agreed to invest in the project.

To our knowledge, no official announcements on foreign participation have ever been made. Watch Indonesia, the NGO that is tracks German involvement, believes that bilateral discussions on the project are being kept deliberately low-key. A December 1997 meeting of the German Indonesian Forum (GIF), a group representing business interests in both countries, included an unpublicised workshop on Mamberamo. The participants included representatives from the companies Ferrosstahl and Siemens. The terms of reference show that German, and to a lesser extent, Australian funding will be used in conjunction with state funds for many of the feasibility studies. The basic preliminary studies are estimated to cost around 13 million DM. Three German companies have already invested about 100,000 DM each in these. Their activities are likely to be in the fields of hydro-electric (Siemens/ Hochtief), heavy industry (Ferrostaal) and infrastructure (Hochtief). No doubt many more snouts will appear at the trough as the plans progress.

According to Indonesian government figures, some 7,000 people live in the area. Nobody really knows, since there are at least 14 uncontacted tribes*. As well as these, dozens of other tribes will be destroyed completely. The indigenous people live a semi-nomadic life—hunting, fishing and growing things. Until recently their main contact with outsiders had been with Indonesian Protestant Church missionaries (GKI) and the Indonesian military searching for Free Papua Movement guerillas (OPM—see interview on page xxx). For many of them the first contact they have with our culture will be when they are forcibly removed from their lands—a nice way to say hello. Those who survive the relocation (many do not) face a life of misery in a squalid shanty town.

The Mamberamo region is a major stronghold of the OPM. It is pretty much the last untouched roadless area where people can hide from the military and mount effective resistance operations. This is probably a very major consideration in Indonesia's decision to destroy it. The scale of this project is horrendous. It's worth repeating here that an area of wild land the size of the whole of the southern half of



Britain will be completly wrecked. It's hard to imagine. If this goes we may as well kiss resistance goodbye.

The idea of destroying wild areas to quell opposition is not new. It has been done throughout history, for example in Scotland by the English to defeat the resisting Clans in the Great Wood of Caledon . In the book 'Desert Solitaire', Edward Abbey points out that the value of areas such as this

> "as a base for resistance to centralised domination is demonstrated by recent history. In Budapest and Santo Domingo for example, popular revolts were easily and quickly crushed because an urbanised environment gives the advantage to the power with the technological equipment. But in Cuba, Algeria and Vietnam the revolutionaries, operating in mountain, desert and jungle hinterlands with the active or tacit support of a thinly dispersed population, have been able to overcome or at least fight to a draw official establishment forces equipped with all of the terrible weapons of twentieth century militarism. Rural insurrections can then be suppressed only by bombing and burning villages and countryside so thoroughly that the mass of the population is forced to take refuge in cities, where the people are then policed and if necessary starved into submission."

This project must not be allowed to go ahead. Time after time we have seen the failure of lobbyists and compromise-brokers to achieve anything meaningful in terms of stopping development. Indeed they rarely challenge the idea of development itself, limiting themselves to negotiation over the distribution of the spoils of the projects.

The resistance in Mamberamo region is still strong and uncompromising, and we have an opportunity here to support a real and total fight against globalisation in its entirety. Local people with their tribal leaders are fighting in their own way against this project. However, they need moral support from you so that their voice becomes strong enough to stop it.

They are also working hard to come to various international arenas, like the UN conference, to present their regret and demands. They are aware of the danger, but no-one listens. They are hoping that the UN will contribute to stopping the project. Without our co-operation here in the West, attacking physically the governments and corporations involved, the people over there will be left with no choice but to ally themselves with the usual pathetic bunch of self-serving sycophants and wannabees who have sold out countless tribal resitance movements the world over. It isn't just a matter of physical survival, a culture is more than that. It is unreasonable to expect hunter-gatherers and pastoralists to learn our ways, our legal systems, in order to stop us destroying them. A community with no concept of land ownership will be destroyed by this process. Their way is to fight. If more of us here in the west support them in their way, rather than trying to change them, they can win this battle. It's very easy to advocate non-violent resistance when you are not the one violence is being used against. People whose families are being decimated feel differently about it.

Contact:

http://www.eco-action.org/opm/
opmsg@eco-action.org
A street address will be forthcoming.

*In 1994, the Mission Aviation Fellowship person in charge of evangelism reported that fourteen tribes had never been contacted by the gospel and they had started working to 'evangelise' them. These are only the ones they have documented; there are many more.



Rumble in the Jungle
Fighting for Freedom in West Papua



This interview with a representative of the OPM took place in a mystery location in a well-known South Coast seaside resort (not the one you're thinking of), with an inept interviewer, a cheap tape recorder, and drunks singing a rousing chorus of 'Rawhide' in the background.

West Papua, the western half of the island of New Guinea is home to rich rainforest and a huge range of different tribal groups—accounting for 0.1% of the world's population, but speaking up to 25% of all known languages. In 1963, this former Dutch colony was annexed by Indonesia and became the province of Irian Jaya. In 1969, a fraudulent referendum involving 1025 indigenous people—the 'Act of Free Choice'—ratified the Indonesian occupation. To maintain its control over West Papua's immense natural resources—including some of the world's best mineral deposits—Indonesia has unleashed one of the least-known genocides of the 20th century. Massacres, rape, torture, disappearances, the seizure of land and cultural assimilation policies have been commonplace, with perhaps a sixth of the 1963 population (300,000 people) killed since the occupation began.

Indonesia's policy of 'transmigration'—relocating millions of people from heavily populated Java, Bali and Madura to the outer islands, to consolidate their grip on them—has also done tremendous damage. But almost from the very start, this catalogue of abuses has been met with determined and inspiring resistance, against incredible odds, from the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM) or Free Papua Movement.

DOD: Can you describe how Indonesia took control in West Papua from 1963?

OPM: My father was included in that process. Because he is one of the people who had contact with outside people (such as missionaries) when Indonesia came and asked for people who give access to us, they said 'Oh, this is one of them', they included my father, there were 1,025 people…

This was for the Act of Free Choice, as they call it…

Yes, this is the story of my father himself. They selected those people based on who they wanted, and they trained them in some Indonesian sentences, like 'I agree with Indonesia' or 'I want Indonesia, I don't want the Dutch'—at least 5 or 6 sentences. My father didn't know the meaning of these sentences. After some weeks, they tested who was doing good in those sentences and my father passed the test, and he was asked to say one of those whole sentences in a meeting.



So the process was basically a complete joke, would you say?
Yes. My father is now feeling very, very sorry. He is saying 'Don't repeat my mistake anymore.' At the time they thought Indonesia was coming to help, supporting independence.
Right, so they didn't realise that they would actually be taken over as part of Indonesia?
Actually they realised later. And all of the 1,025 are now against Indonesia. When I am here, they are now protesting. They are standing and they say 'I signed these and now I want to pay it back.'
Did anyone realise that the US was very much behind the Indonesians and was pressurising the UN to hand West Papua over to the Indonesians?
We didn't realise, but now me and the others are learning, we realise that during the Cold War the US wanted to control the Pacific area.

Traditional Tribal Culture

How would you describe traditional West Papuan cultures? For example, the relationship between the tribes and the land has been described as the people and the land 'owning' one another. Compared, say, to what you find here in England, what sort of things define West Papuan society?
That's something I have been talking about. There are many things based on my view that are missing here, like we value the collective way of life. We stay in one house or one building, we know each other by names, by background, we greet each morning, we greet: 'Where are you going?' You don't do that here. First time I come here and I was greeting people, they seemed negative, and I smile to people and they feel 'Who are you?'. And it is different.
What sort of relationship is there between the tribes and the land that they exist upon?
That's one of the things I am missing here. I first came to a big city for a few months, then went to one of the villages over there, and then after a few more months I came here. It is not my way, moving every couple of months, because culturally my habit is getting settled in one place, get to know the trees, whatever I have in the nature, and they know me and I know them, even the animals, whatever, around my life. And when I was in the city, I couldn't do that because I must move, and we don't have any relation with nature, that's what I feel here. But in my place you can see that people are so tied to their land…
Because the ancestors are in the land too and that's a connection going back hundreds or thousands of years?
And we feel that we can talk to the land. Many people here don't understand me, but we do. Like plants, like weather—I can say for example 'Rains', if rain comes, and I can say 'Stop, I'm going to do this' and it can stop. Not because of my magic or whatever as people may suspect, but it is just normal because I understand them and they understand me.
How has the Indonesian domination affected traditional West Papuan cultures—for example, Operation Koteka [1970s attempt to get Papuans to dress 'properly'—the word is an insulting term for the penis gourds worn by Dani tribesmen. An Indonesian foreign minister said that they were determined to "get them down from the trees even if we have to pull them down"], he punishments for raising the West Papuan 'Morning Star' flag, the teaching of the Pancasila [Indonesia's "national ideology"], and throwing people off the land and so breaking that connection they have with the land?
Really, really massive, and it is the suffering I think, where we have been suffering very, very much.
What sort of form does this take?
I am writing a book on this topic, to tell my people this is what's happening in our culture with the Christian Church. I don't mean that religion is wrong, but the Church itself—it has its own culture—and they break up our own culture, the social structures. They have their own clergymen who say: 'Don't listen to the tribal leader about this—this is the correct way', and that means they destroy our life, which was for whole decades, for generations. This means that we suffer, for we do not know how to step from that to this.
So you are almost caught between two worlds?
Two worlds, yes. We are confused, we become victims of this change. We are not well informed in what to do… And the second is the government: they have their own cultural structure that they are imposing on us. They have governors, they have everything, until the village level, where they also impose their own rules. They have programs like family planning, transmigration, translocation; if someone's against it, they must be punished, and they have laws, regulations, and it breaks up everything which was existing in the past. Indonesia have a policy of uniting the diversity; everybody's Indonesian and must speak the Indonesian language, behave like Indonesian people and don't say anything which distinguishes you from the others.
Which is a bit difficult because there are an awful lot of cultures in West Papua, and there's even



more different cultures across the whole Indonesian archipelago.

It's logically impossible, but they are forcing it. Everybody feels that they are killing us in the long run, they are eliminating our right… We believe that when people take our lands, or exploit our lands, or move us, that is like taking plants and seeds from my land to here and saying 'it can grow here because this is land, this is soil, this country has soil and that country has soil, so we can just plant here'—it is impossible. It means we are killing it, even though the plant is still alive; so it is with moving people from one village to another, one land to the other.

Like the way in which lots of Papuan people have been relocated from, say, the Central Highlands to the Lowlands, and they don't have the resistance to the malaria you find in the Lowlands. They know how to live in the Highlands.

But not on the coast! We suffer much. People from the coast, they know, and they don't have any serious malarial disease. You go there and you can see that many people are in the hospital—they are from the Highlands, the many troubles are with the Highlanders, with those who are moved from one place to another. Even the Javanese, they have many, many troubles.

With transmigration, hundreds of thousands of people have been brought over to West Papua and to the other islands like Sulawesi or Sumatra, and in some cases it might have worked, but in many cases it's almost like they've been dumped in that area. In your experience are the transmigrants doing badly or well?

The transmigrants and us, we are just victims of those policymakers, so they are also suffering, but they don't know how to claim or who to blame. I have been with transmigrants for about 3 years, visiting them when I was studying at the university, and they were expressing their concern: 'We miss our lands and our cities and this is a different land.' They were thinking West Papua was good for them, but it is hot, and the land is different, and how they cultivate the rice.

Do they still try to cultivate it as they did in Java?

They tried, but they are failing—because even though they have large lands, they don't produce as they produce in Java. Some of them sell their lands and go back to Java.

Is it true that when you clear the jungle the soil itself is quite poor; so it doesn't work when it is cleared in transmigration projects, say for the oil palm plantations, but the way Papuans have done it does work because you are still keeping most of the forest cover instead of clearing a huge great area?

I would say that we have our own way, which is better. We know how to balance the ecosystem, because we know very well what will happen—without any scientific knowledge we know how to balance it. In my culture we only cut the trees and make gardens in a special place. We don't hunt there, we know where to farm and where not to farm. You cannot hunt every time you want, but we have regulations saying that this is the month or the day you can hunt. These regulations come from our culture. We have people in power to say 'Now you can go and hunt', and if we plant crops, 'Now you can take your crops or not.' I cannot say 'This is my plant and I want to take it'—in my culture I must wait for instructions to take it. But it doesn't work now. Government officials or the Army come and want to take it—just take it… 'This is my power, I can take whatever I want'… and this is breaking up our culture. We told the tribal leaders that what we have already is good.

Because the modern life is attractive to some groups? It holds lots of promise for them?

Yes. We were thinking that influences from outside are good, but now from here I see that no, we were better off than now—many things are missing here—like relations with the people, relations with the nature, with the animals. I cannot find them here.

Impact of the Indonesian Occupation

This, I don't know, may be a bit painful, but in the last few years we've heard a lot about the genocide perpetrated against East Timor, perhaps a third of the population killed. Have the people of West Papua experienced similar horrific treatment at the hands of the Indonesians?

I myself was in some of the wars, not fighting, but when I was a child. And I saw myself, people were killed. I think compared to East Timor, West Papua is worse.

Worse?!

Worse, because the large numbers, the numbers of people killed, and the treatment is worse, and also it is never exposed because of the isolation—few people can speak English or get access to the outside world. I am the one person from the Baliem Valley abroad now. No one else.

And the Baliem Valley is a massive area…?

Biggest tribe in the island. We have been isolated for so long.



I am almost surprised to hear you say, and with such certainty, that it's worse than East Timor. Just for me, sitting here, it's so far out of my experience that it's hard to imagine in what way anybody could have had even worse treatment than the East Timorese.

Like, in my place, one village that was against the Indonesians, they finished the whole village, completely bombed and killed everybody, and no one knows because it is just one valley. We live in mountainous areas and from one valley to another we don't know each other. So we don't know what's happening in the other tribe, and they can just easily finish, and no one will come against—compared to East Timor which is just a small island, people know what's happening in their village, it's just closer to the outside world…

Because East Timor has a stronger national society than in small tribes?

And also they have more people educated. They have been with Portugal for 400 years, where West Papua now, we just had contact with in the 1940s and 1960s—in Highlands, '60s. So we don't know how to open our cases. (Pause.) I saw myself how people were cut into pieces. I saw myself, when I was seven years old, I went with my uncle, my uncle brought me on his shoulders, and they took me down and they cut him in front my eyes, you see…

What had he done, had he done nothing…?

Because he had a moustache and they were thinking: your hair should be cut short and you must clean this. You must be tidy in your clothes, if not, you will be questioned. There is a certain way you must have your hair, how to put on your clothes. If this is not the way they want then you are rebelling.

So that's really treating you like you're children, basically.

Yes! Sure. (Laughs.) The East Timorese, they have knowledge to oppose what's happening by Indonesia, but we don't know. We can't do anything because we are too weak.

I wanted to try and give people an idea of the natural beauty in West Papua. It seems a remarkably beautiful and rich place—the jungles and mangrove swamps and the mountains, the birds of paradise, the tree kangaroos, the cassowaries and so on. Can you give people a sense of what this is like and what's being lost as a result of what's going on?

We have, compared to what I am seeing here, like, many trees, you can see, I don't have any words to describe it, it is natural. We can see birds singing—yes, I can see birds singing here, but not so many. Many, many birds, and plants—people are asking me here 'See this bush', but no, no, this is not bush, this is not natural. I don't have any words, but it is really different here, and I have told people that this is modified world—like food and everything is made modified, this is already modified, and my world is the real world. (Laughs.)

So even though the villages would be growing their gardens and so on, it's still a very wild landscape. If you were in your home village now what would you see around you?

Many creatures—particularly in the morning and in the afternoon. Many birds are going to their nests and going out from their nests, and we have special places where we go, for ourselves, when we have finished completing some serious meetings [sounds familiar!], and we go there just to watch the birds coming back in… we know the places where birds go… and it is different. I am here and it is stressful. And I want to go back quickly. People think I would stay here as this is the modern world, but for me personally, I think most of my people at least would agree, my life is more related to the nature, not with this (laughs) kind of world. We know the characteristics of different species from our ancestors, for example that that is an important tree. This is passed on through the story holder. My father is one of the story holders. And they tell stories, and we know where we can go and where we cannot go.

Why can you go to one place but not to another?

We believe in spirits, you know, so there are some places where we can have trouble but there are some places that are safe, and to my forest other people cannot go, because that's my forest, my spirit is there and I have my power authority on my own land—and if someone else goes there, he will get lost or get trouble, whatever.

And the Indonesians and transmigrants just don't fit into this at all—they seem totally alien?

I said strong word—I said 'killing us', even though they won't say that; they will say we are helping you—but I do think they realise they are killing us.

What sort of environmental impact has the Indonesian occupation had—like the logging, the oil palm plantations, the Trans-Irian Highway [built along the border with Papua New Guinea, to control the region and open it up for resource extraction], the Mamberamo Dam and so on. Does this make it difficult to carry on the original way of life if the forest is going, and the animals are being chased away?

That's right. We feel that these policies are hurting us and we are fighting back. Actually the basic idea was to preserve the life—it is our life that we want to preserve. We don't want any policy which comes from outside and changes everything. All people are working to defend the culture, the survival of the people, and they mostly fight with the companies—they kidnapped some of the logging companies. Then they took hostage people who were with the World Wildlife Fund because they thought they were from the mining company; that they had sent these people to do surveys, to expand the mining activities. And they said 'We don't want it—it's something we are fighting against, we are fighting to close this mining company.' After that they realise that this is not someone here to exploit this land, but that they want to preserve the land, and they say 'Oh no, there is something wrong here', but it has already happened.

When they do that sort of thing against, say, representatives of Freeport [the biggest mining company involved in West Papua] does it have the desired effect; does it get them to actually change their ways?

Yes, that's a big problem now, because we are defending our traditional ways. In West Papua we have two kinds of communities—one is called kingdom, like here, we have small kingdoms, where people listen to one king and it is inherited by his children or brother. But there are also people who live in military communities—meaning that we live like the military, under strong discipline. And we choose our people for leadership and their command because of their skill in fighting. The kingdom is inherited, but the military is elected. And in these military tribes, they are fighting in their own way—and we don't know how to fight better in this modern world. We are just fighting back traditionally, for this is our way to disagree. In my culture, to disagree is to fight; that's what I can do, because that's what I know. And people here from this world say that this is guerrilla fighters, terrorist groups or whatever; from here, I can see myself in that situation. And that is a good lesson I am learning. That's our only way—fighting—our way of disagreeing things. Not the way that this world wants or approves.



Presumably that means that in fighting the traditional way you are often fighting with the traditional tools, like spears or bows and arrows, is that right?

Yes.

So you're up against the Indonesian Army…

Yes (Laughs).

With its helicopters, and guns, and…

Jet fighters (Laughs).

And all sorts. Although it sounds like the OPM experiences a remarkable amount of success considering how the odds are stacked against them; and it seems like that is partly because they know the terrain so well, they know the land, and it is very difficult to track people down in the jungle.

And also we know how to manipulate—we can work with the land, with nature. We can ask rain to come, it is easy, and we can ask the landlords, I mean, the spirits…

The landlords? Not these sort of landlords, here in the pub!?

Not this kind here. (Laughs) No! No! The landlords tell them, send them back to their own camps, and they will do it, they can't find us. I can just walk around the village…

In English, we might say that it 'bewilders' them.

Yes. They don't know where to go and they get lost, even though we are just watching them.

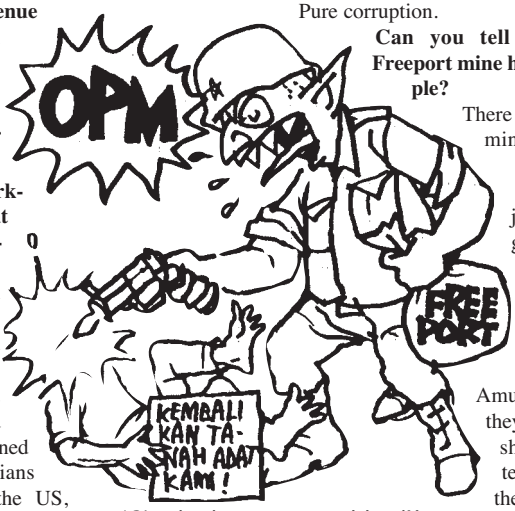
So you're saying you are almost invisible to them.

Invisible. Because we are with our nature. They know us and we know them, and the nature, and they will help us, for we help them.

The Indonesians stand out, but you don't. You blend into it.
Yes.

Freeport and Grasberg—Multinational mining scum in action

What is your impression of the role of foreign companies, because obviously this is very relevant to people in the UK, where a lot of these companies are based. The example that springs to mind immediately is the mining, particularly the Grasberg mine operated by Freeport [The world's richest gold mine, and the third biggest copper mine]. Grasberg seems very similar to RTZ's Panguna mine [See "A Tragedy on Bougainville" in *DoD* No. 5] in that Indonesia gets an awful lot of revenue from it, as Papua New Guinea does from Bougainville. I was wondering, what is the significance of Freeport, and since 1995, RTZ? [now working with Freeport at Grasberg in a mammoth joint venture.]
In particular Freeport has had a long history, even before West Papua came to be Indonesian. We need help in this case to find out what really happened between the Indonesians and the Dutch and the US, because we think there is a vested interest. And they didn't care about the people, and they didn't care about the environment, they only cared about what they benefit. Like in the Act of Free Choice, no UN representatives were allowed to enter West Papua because Indonesia said 'it's risky now, you can't go', but at the same time, Freeport people were operating, and this is a question mark.
Am I right in thinking that Freeport were very close to Suharto [evil murdering bastard, recently deposed as Indonesian dictator—shame he didn't get the Ceaucescu treatment] as well?
Yes—Suharto was the commander-in-chief in taking West Papua into Indonesia... There's a lot of money changing hands in all of this. Today we have the Dutch Amro Bank—it has shares in Grasberg. I think it is helping Freeport to develop the new contract now, the second contract, for the extension of another 50 years of exploration. RTZ are also involved. Then there are the Korean logging companies. And most of the logging companies belong to Suharto. He was involved in West Papua through [his infamous timber baron crony] Bob Hasan. And they belong to the Army as well. So, in the logging camps, there is the army.
The army doing the logging work?
Yes. So people like the Forest Department cannot do anything because they are civil servants. 'We are Army and we are bringing this, so you cannot say anything, you cannot ask for a letter, permission, or whatever…'
So that's just pure corruption.
Pure corruption.



'Give back our ancestral land!'

Can you tell us what effects the Freeport mine has had on the local people?
There are five tribes around the mining area. They are moved first—we say translocated, which is just the same as transmigration. In particular the Amungme has the land where Freeport is based; Tembagapura town [Freeport's 'company town'] is where the Amungme come from, where they live. They are crying, shouting, speaking out, telling stories about how they relate to that mountain, that land, that this is what you are doing, this is what you are destroying in this way. People die and suffer from diseases because their world has changed, psychologically actually they suffer. There are many psychological problems that have never been cured up to now.
Because they've been wrenched away, if you like.
Yes.
Isn't one of the OPM leaders from that area originally—what's his name?
Yes, Kelly Kwalik, who took the WWF hostages, he was from there.
And he's taken actions against the mine, because he comes from there… It's a gold as well as a copper mine—presumably that means you get a lot of pollution from the mine itself, like mercury and so



on. Is the quality of the rivers suffering as a result, as has happened on the Amazon, and people are less able to use it?

Yes, it's true. Culturally, we don't boil water to drink, we can just drink. We know what river we can drink directly, and some of those are polluted now; and we also fish on the rivers. In 1990, in the mid-1980s, there were people dying because of drinking the water. They didn't know, they hadn't experienced this before. They were just crossing the river, and they drink, and they died. And it was in the local newspaper but nothing happened afterwards, no response from the government over it.

So no clean up.

No. If you go to Freeport, before you land you can see the waste of the company—rivers come down amidst dirt, dirt river, because of the waste running off it, and you can see many plants dry out and you almost cannot see any living plants. And it's dry. Hectares of… you can see a big strip of destruction alongside the river, from the airplane…

If the spirits are in the land, how is it viewed in the traditional beliefs if a huge great crater is being dug out of the land?

They, especially the tribal leaders, they cry, just like children, you know, because they feel that they are being killed. We have houses for men where we gather together, and we talk, we discuss, and the elders tell stories: 'this is actually what it should be, now it's changing', and they cry. By that way they tell the younger generation what is happening. Like my father tells stories—and they give us advice, 'do this, don't do this', and when they tell these stories, they cry. But that's what they can do, they can't do anything else. (Pause.) The reason the government gives is that it is going to help you, develop you—because you are primitive, left-behind.

Assuming that people wanted jobs in the mine anyway, is it not true that very few of them go to West Papuans; it's mainly a thing for foreigners or Indonesians?

True. Because I can say only 20% are West Papuans working there.

And what sort of jobs are they doing?

This 20% are only going underground—not sitting in the office.

Right, they're doing the dirty work.

Yes. Up to now, I can say only one person from the tribes is working, sitting in front of a computer in the office, with a tie and everything. But for those who are in the ground, it is risky work. They can die and it doesn't matter; you have signed the contract.

Is it true that Tembagapura is an incredibly luxurious place, with a Sheraton hotel, golf course, helicopter pads and all this other stuff as well? It just seems really out of place…

It's sad. I go there, I cry, because from that luxury world you can see its real owners walking round in traditional dress. I am from there, and when I see my people, just in the airport, it is very, very, very insulting and sad. They look down on us there—as if to say 'Who are you?'. They will ask you that if you go to the airport or the hotel—they don't want you there, because you are disturbing the place. There are some families who we work for—I can call that a form of slavery actually. They just pay you back with rice. Because their reason is 'You don't have rice', that's the rationale. 'You don't have rice here, you don't eat as much fish as we do, because we have companies and we have police and we can feed you—but you need to work here, cut the grass, clean the yards, the whole day you can work here, and do everything we want you to do, and then at the lunchtime come and have rice.' That's how we get paid.

But isn't there plenty of food that you could grow anyway, or you could find in the forest?

We have sweet potatoes, but not rice.

And rice is seen as better?

Yes , that's what happens now. And local people see all this rice, that it makes these people rich, cars and everything. This is food for this class of people.

It's almost like it is power to have that sort of food.

Yes. Food is like identity, who that person is.

So that's why they work there rather than eating the food from the jungle?

That's right. Crazy, isn't it?! (Laughs).

The OPM and Resistance to Indonesian Rule

We've been talking about things that are quite depressing and downbeat in a lot of ways, but from what I've heard, the West Papuan movement seems to be getting stronger. Could you tell us a little bit about the OPM? Is it true that, as has been said: 'We are all OPM. OPM is in the hearts and minds of every West Papuan'? I was also wondering what you could tell us about the OPM structure and history, how it operates as underground networks in the cities, and as guerrillas in the bush. What is the current state of play between the OPM and the Army? I saw that there was a cease-fire between the Indonesians and the



OPM units in one part of the territory, so does that signify a certain change as well?

Yes. The first question is about history, right? I think it was started from 1st December 1963, where it was planned. And then, I can say we are because we're Papuan, OPM and West Papuan is the same. That from West Papua, we are just the same, even though in front of the government officials, people will say 'I am not OPM, no.' But if you go to them in their house, they will talk differently, and cry in front of you that they are suffering because of their people, and that they feel 'OPM is for us'. We think getting a position in Indonesia is important—when we get a position we can talk, we can do something. We cannot say in front of the people, 'I'm against it', because we want to be in the government, and know more about what's happening in there, and then we can work for our people.

So there are people who are gaining influence or working undercover in the colonial power structure, but are there still people out in the jungle carrying out armed operations?

Yes. Kelly Kwalik, who took the hostages, is actually the regional commander in Freeport's area, he is responsible for the fight against it, and there is another leader, Matthias Wenda—he is commander in chief. And they are basically fighting for rights and survival and these issues we are talking about. About the cease-fire—actually that can happen because I am here. It has just happened because we understand more now how we can do that. TPM is the name of the armed force, OPM is the civil organisation; just like Sinn Fein and IRA, it's similar. (Laughs.) We are learning now what method the world will listen to us more.

We began the traditional way, with fighting, but now let us have a cease-fire and then see who is actually killing the people. The army tells the local villagers, 'That's because of the OPM', although actually, logically, this Indonesian army killed them, but they then point out, 'OPM caused you to die, why do you want to agree with the OPM, let us join and fight them with you.'

Do they get many takers for that? Do people actually believe it?

Emotionally, they say 'We want to fight', but culturally they can't; they know that we are fighting for them, and we are fighting for our land, for our culture, for the survival of the community. They know this because we tell the stories to keep this culture widespread, for everybody. They will get the emotion for one, two days, because of the people dying, and the crying, and everything. They will say, 'Oh yes—OPM, that's why we are being killed and we hate them.' But then after some days, they rationalise what's actually happening to them, and there are people telling stories…

This is like the storykeeper thing, it gets brought into the story cycle…

Where the men gather together and sleep in one house, they discuss broad topics, including this, and they have arguments, and they come out with conclusions: 'The Indonesians are manipulating the situation, actually the OPM are helping us, they are really fighting for us.'

The 1984 attack on Jayapura [the West Papuan capital] backfired badly, and lots of the underground networks of OPM sympathisers had to flee from there. Did the OPM recover the strength in its underground networks?

Now we have problem in the bush, not in the city. The underground is now stronger. It has changed because Suharto has stepped down, and the underground is even more clear now, we can't stay underground anymore—it's come above ground—now everybody is claiming, 'I am for freedom, openness.'

What is the OPM vision for a free West Papua? How would the people like to live free of the Indonesians? I assume that it would be independent of Papua New Guinea. PNG hasn't had the occupation or anything like that, but does have serious problems, say with Bougainville, the illegal [and legal!] logging, government corruption and so on. I was just wondering how you might manage to avoid repeating those mistakes. It would be great to have the Indonesians gone, but what follows?

We have been talking about this because this question came from many people. They say you want the Indonesians out, but you will still have another government. Government is the same, whatever government it is, they do the same thing.

There is that problem!

Yes! Because government want to always allow companies in, contracts, and mining companies. My view—and I think most of my people from the Highlands would agree with me—is to come back to the traditions, that's what we would like to promote, where every tribe has their own leadership, it is governed by a council of acknowledged tribal leaders. I have read a book on government in Switzerland and it was a good example, how they made their country, where local leadership is strong, that's the most effective.



Post-Suharto, Indonesia is talking about devolving power more down to the local level, and bypassing the provincial level. How do you then avoid repeating the same old problems with corruption, but at a new smaller scale? It's perhaps less of a problem in the traditional tribal set-up, but I can still see temptation, and grounds for corruption, especially if there is lots of money floating around on offer from the corporations and others. It's a difficult question, I know, everybody worries about this…

We are worrying now, because we ourselves are talking—'OK, we want to fight, but then after we get it, what would we do?' We will have another war between the tribes, between the government, and be just like PNG, because this is one island and this is going to be our problem as well. My tribe is the biggest tribe in the island, and people on the coasts are thinking, 'Oh, maybe this tribe will become authoritative.'

Like situations you have in Nigeria, say, where one tribe monopolises government.

And this is one thing that is in the future, after I go back—we must sit and talk between the academics, between the politicians, among the West Papuans ourselves, we want to clarify this, set up this before…

Do the ordinary people have the same input into this sort of discussion process?

Our tribal leaders, particularly in this year now, are standing in front of the government saying that they want to defend us, which has not happened before, but now they are planning it: 'I am tribal leader, I want my people free, free from you', and I want that to go on, for them to speak for the people, not politicians, not educated people or whatever.

Do tribal leaders make the decisions for themselves, or with lots of input from the rest of the tribe—because I can see how they might not respect the wishes of the tribe as much as they should, not pay as much attention…

There is a trouble in the kingdom system of leadership, mostly on the coast—they don't care about people, but the people are still loyal to their king. But in the Highlands, they elect people based on what they do, and they can be set down in just a day.

So they can be brought down in a day if they've annoyed people too much, so they've got to be quite careful!

They must do much consultation—they can't force people to do things. If I were tribal leader, I must be convinced, I must have assurance, that my people will do what I'm saying. I must be sure that they are in agreement, and we have the proof in our tribal discussions and many consultations, and we have made up our minds in our men's house, and I must go on with that decision—and that means they will do it. We don't say leader actually (laughs), in our language we say someone in front. "Leaders" here have agendas, and it is like they want to influence people for their agendas, but my father is a leader, and I know how he leads. I never see his agenda force other people; he accommodates the agendas from people, he values, he collects agendas, and then examines them. He tells people: 'Your idea is good, but I think this will happen, what do you think about this?' I don't know more about the kingdom system, but it's more like top-down.

Women in the Struggle

This is another thorny subject, but when you talk about the men's house, I wonder how much input the women have into the decision making process. Do women make their voice known as well?

Now it is changing, but in general, women almost have no voice in government, in local, traditional government. They have their voice in some certain aspects, like regarding food, how we have guests, how to serve the guests, who will do what, who will contribute this food and on what day and these kind of things—how to distribute foods when we have great feasts, how to divide the food into groups. In the case of food, delivery, family business, women have power, we listen to women, but not about the government, about fighting.

Is there any call from the women to have a greater say?

This week, for the first time they have a conference of women in West Papua. Women who were raped, who were treated badly during the wars, when the army take them to their bars, and those women who have gathered together, now they are speaking out for themselves, saying 'Now, we want to be heard.' It has happened from the last two years, when we had protest against the mining companies, when the president of Freeport came…

Jim Bob! [Moffett, highly eccentric head of Freeport]

Yes. Bob came to the area, the men didn't say anything, they told the women, 'Go and tell him, because he is from a mother, that's why he is alive, he is Bob because of his mother'—and his mother is more important than his father, based on our culture…



You don't have to be mad to work here…
Jim Bob Moffett's pearls of wisdom: "We are thrusting a spear of economic development into the heartland of Irian Jaya… We're going to mine all the way to New Orleans… This is not a job for us, it's a religion."

Sorry, explain that, I suspect that's an important, subtle point…

Like, if my father and my mother give me advice which is contradictory, I will prefer to listen to my mother, culturally.

That seems strange to me—the women traditionally have had less input into decision making because their domain is the family, but you, a man, will listen more to your mother than to your father. It seems slightly paradoxical…

Yes, yes. (Much merriment.) In public decision making, gathering opinions, the men are allowed, not women—but these leaders, if they still have their mothers alive, they go and see them for advice. If I tell you the value of advice, actually the mothers have more influence—and the wives also have influence but not as much.

You were saying that Jim Bob cried when he came to Freeport. I have to say that it's not unknown for business leaders to be hypocritical and to cry what we call crocodile tears [by far the most likely explanation, given Freeport's behaviour before and since the visit]—but people took that as a sincere and meaningful thing, is that right?

Yes, they did. Bob cried when Yosepha Kwalik, the woman who led the meeting, threw her noken [a woven bag in which Amungme women carry babies and piglets] at him, and said "My son Moffett, in the past I put you inside my noken, I took you with me wherever I went, but I did not realise that you actually suck my blood until it's all drained, and I remain only in bones without flesh. Now I pick you out of my noken and will throw you far away." She asked him to reconsider what he and his company have been doing.

And that was linked to the fact that for the first time women were spokespeople as opposed to the men being the representatives. People thought this was a breakthrough when they met Jim Bob, and this was partly linked with the fact that it was the women who had spoken to him.

Yes. We thought women are talking for our people, which never happened before now, and a lot of sympathy among our tribal people, that now it is women who are talking for us, and let us support it.

And they didn't mind that even though it had been perhaps against the previous customs?

Culturally, they had no problem. The people supported her, they say 'Go woman, say more.' That was the first historical step in that culture, where women can talk, and now women are feeling, 'We can say something for the people now, and this person cried because of us, which didn't happen when men were talking to him. We changed him.' The men agree, we can't do that to that point. Only women can do that. Women have some abilities to do certain things, and that's why we are saying 'OK, you have done something, now go on, develop what you can do next.'

West Papua After Suharto—What does the Future Hold?

I was wondering if the prospects for West Papua have improved since the downfall of Suharto. Habibie [Suharto's replacement] has talked of independence for East Timor—is anything similar on the cards for West Papua? I know talks were planned for sometime this year. West Papua seems a lot stronger since the fall of Suharto—pro-Papuan demonstrations in Jakarta, a series



of flag raisings across West Papua, and as you say, the spirit of independence is more widespread now.

I've just read emails from West Papua, reporting that the national dialogue with President Habibie and us will happen on 26th of February. They're in Jayapura now, and 70 people will fly out tomorrow to Java for that dialogue, led by Church leaders, who are playing very important roles now. They are saying 'No manipulation, no games from the government. No trickery. We want to let people say whatever they want, whether it is against, or for Indonesia, it doesn't matter.' What we want is that they talk for themselves—the Church for West Papua is saying 'We are new Church, we work for the people, we help people to speak out for their own rights', so they have selected 70 people from the whole. I can say that this is the second Act of Free Choice.

Well, yes, that's what I was afraid of in a way.

And there is a tribal leader who was involved in the Act of Free Choice, he is now the leader of the West Papuan tribal council.

This is Theys Eluay, the guy who recently got arrested for discussing independence. Is he out of prison now?

He can't be kept in prison, because he has people—if he is imprisoned, thousands of people will come, so they can't do anything to him.

So this is like a breakthrough, really—my impression is that it is starting to build up what you could call an irresistible momentum—the spirit was so strong, the momentum was so strong…

So strong.

That it's going to be very difficult for Jakarta to sell them out.

Now Jakarta is offering autonomy, and autonomy plus, as they call it—but people are saying 'Not these two, we want independence, your agenda is yours, but this dialogue is from us, not the government agenda. We proposed, we initiated, we suggested and our goal is independence.' So in these weeks, January, February, it is very clear, they are open, people acclaim now 'Yes, we want independence.' They can be honest about it.

That's great. Aren't people still being repressed as well though? Isn't it true that anybody who proclaims independence will be punished, because it is a betrayal of Indonesia?

That can happen, for somebody. If I say that, it is easy for Indonesia to take me to prison, because I am nobody, I am not a tribal leader, I have no people. That's why we are saying…nobody can say this, just the tribal leaders can say this. Even the Governor is just saying 'OK, we support national government policy'—he hasn't got authority from the people, so if he is against, or for independence, he won't have support.

But to an extent, the Indonesians have never had authority, they just relied upon military might—so I'm not sure how it's any different now. Because Indonesia has severe economic problems, I assume that they need to keep the money coming in from Grasberg and elsewhere. I thought they'd also just announced a new 5 year plan for the transmigration programme—giving a strong incentive to keep West Papua down, under their thumb, and keep the money rolling in. I don't mean to be pessimistic, but I can see how it might be business as usual.

It is not easy for Jakarta to let us go, because we feed Jakarta, that's what we say. If they lose us, it means Jakarta will have problems, especially in finances.

So they have this strong demand for independence building up in West Papua now after 36 years, and yet one of the reasons why they have been there all this time is because it is a huge money spinner, so they don't want to sacrifice the money. I can see how they might try and manipulate the tribal leaders, and so forth.

Yes, that's my worry. The Church are promising that they are doing their best not to be tricked by the government, but we can't totally believe it, because Indonesia is there in power. But what I personally believe is that Theys Eluay cannot be influenced by whoever, because he has his own position already clearly stated in front of the government; there are 70 people, but only one person himself, our hope is in him.

How open are the discussions going to be? Are people back in West Papua going to know what's going on or will it be behind closed doors?

It has been a long story about the Act of Free Choice, which was that we were blaming each other. My people are blaming my father, he did something wrong, and we don't want that to be repeated again, because it disturbed our culture relationship. So now we want to be open, we want to be transparent, we want the 70 to be more responsible to us, because…

There's going to be hell to pay if they don't!

Yes. If you do it twice… you knew what happened before and you have learned the risk of those mistakes and don't repeat it again—that is our demand now, and they have this burden on their minds. (Laughs). They can come back with the result that



we expect them to achieve, you must say whatever it is we ask you to do. And that's independence.

What would be the attitude to the natural environment in an independent West Papua? What would happen with the logging, with the mining and so on? Obviously, people think they have to make money, but that presupposes certain things, so…

Most Highlanders like me, we own the mining area, we are saying shut it down, because we can make money from different ways, not only from digging up and breaking our ecosystem. Developing ecotourism, that is our main concern now, because we have learned from countries in South America where they have done this, and I will push this idea because we have five tribes [around the mining area], and I am from one of the tribes, and I will impose this, mining companies—we can allow them 5 years and then it doesn't help us.

Assuming the Indonesians left, what would the ecotourism money go towards? If money wasn't seen as necessary before then what's changed, what new needs do you have now?

Yes, even though, like me, we feel that money is important, there are people in the Highlands saying now 'What's money for? We can't eat it.' I think only people like those politicians and educated people will think about the money. Not the local people, more money is not their concern—their concern is: 'We don't want to die, we don't want to disturb our lands, we don't want these trees to be cut down.' If they live in the traditional house, their concern is different. But those people who have education, we need money only for, say, communication systems—how we can communicate between tribes is one of the most difficult problems now. All over West Papua, it is important for us to build up telecommunication systems and TV and video, just for sharing what's happening in the other villages, opening their minds.

For sharing and communication in principle that's quite a noble aim—and look at the world I live in; it's got all these things already so I'm in no position to judge. But I think you are likely to get certain difficulties with that—for instance, the Indian government has deliberately introduced TV sets into their tribal villages, to bring them into the mainstream of Indian society and get them living a certain sort of lifestyle.

Yes, it is a danger.

Mr. Mysterious X-tremist: Wouldn't ecotourism destroy your culture? The demands that the tourists put, they would want houses, they'd want someone to clean the floor—they wouldn't be happy to live the same way as you do.

Yes, it's difficult.

What can we do in support of people in West Papua here in the UK, to force Indonesia to stop their abuses, to increase the demand for independence?

Yes, one thing is finding out actually what happened with Freeport, the early process, because politicians say 'Where's the proof? So it is nonsense.' We don't have the knowledge of English, or of how to deal with this modern world, but we know there was something wrong between Indonesia and Freeport and US and Dutch. But how can we claim this, how can we go back to the 1960s and prove that this was wrong, that's one main problem. The second is what made the Dutch allow Indonesia to take our land without our agreement—only of the 1025 [in the Act of Free Choice].

Do you think we should put pressure on companies like RTZ, or the Indonesian embassy or whatever, to force them to change?

Yes. We are speaking out for this. Some people are saying that it is the armies who are killing people, not the companies—and Freeport, for instance, denies any human rights violations by arguing that it is there for business, not for killing people, animals and plants. This is a crazy answer—the Indonesians kill us because they want to secure the mining. Without the companies and the mining there will be no killing anymore, as simple as that. [It's not all by proxy either—Freeport's security guards have also had direct involvement in various incidents.] Indonesia and the companies will respond to pressure—it is clear they are guilty—but now we are trying to find out how to influence, and which angle we can use to put pressure on them. Partly because we don't know how to—as I said, we are fighting now in all ways—and we need people to tell us this is the way the British Government will listen to you, or this is the way that America will do something for you, and we want to listen to those ideas. It's one of the purposes of my mission that I'm bringing here—because my belief is that the traditional leaders are the people, not me—I'm just like the telephone line, communicating between you here and there, to the speakers of the people, the tribal leaders. When I go back, I will be behind them, I won't speak in front.



Update

The National Dialogue initiated in February is so far proceeding without too much trouble—certainly when compared to the rampant death squad persecution in the run-up to the upcoming referendum in East Timor. Tribal leaders are sticking to the demands for complete independence, and information posts have been set up around the country—particularly in the towns—to publicise the process. Worryingly however, there are reports of police and army repression of a flag raising ceremony in Sorong on 5th July. 400 soldiers opened fire on the crowd, killing an unknown number, seriously injuring many and detaining up to 140 people. The city was put under strict control after the massacre, with a curfew imposed, all shops closed and searches underway for OPM suspects. Elsewhere in West Papua the army is threatening to close down the information posts even though they are clearly a significant part of the Dialogue. Nonetheless, a representative of the OPM summed up the current mood as follows: "Before, the hope for freedom in West Papua was regarded as just a dream that hardly ever becomes a reality, or as something in the air that we cannot grasp. But the national dialogue has given this dream an unforgettable momentum in our history: the time when the Indonesian President listened to our demand to regain our robbed independence. Both sides must now go away and think it through—and we are thinking about it by establishing the posts that help all West Papuans to think about it, not just our national representatives. By doing this we have reclaimed independence—it is already in our hands, no longer just in the air. Now the President must decide when to give it to us, and it is our hope that the world will approve it—without a repetition of the act of no choice of 1969."

[Many thanks to Da Duchess, for Dancing With Dictaphones above and beyond the call of duty.]

Resources

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Indonesia's Secret War: The Guerrilla Struggle in Irian Jaya", Robin Osborne (Allen & Unwin 1985).

East Timor, West Papua/Irian and Indonesia", Keith Suter (Minority Rights Group Report 1998.) (Available from: MRG, 379 Brixton Rd, London SW9 7DE.)

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(Excellent organisation—produce newsletter with a good overview of Indonesian environmental/social justice issues. Subscriptions around £10 a year.)

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OPM Resistance to Indonesian Rule

1st May 1963: West Papua (now the province of Irian Jaya) passes from Dutch to Indonesian control, on the condition that the Indonesians hold a referendum to decide the ultimate status of the territory within 6 years.

26th July 1965: The 'Kebar Incident'—the first outbreak of hostilities, as Papuan forestry and agriculture department employees kill Indonesian troops, seize weapons and flee into the bush.

28th July 1965: 400 men attack infantry battalion barracks in Arfai, Manokwari, in the western Bird's Head region of West Papua. Indonesians launch counter-insurgency "Operation Consciousness" in response. The OPM gradually begins to emerge during the unrest of 1965-67.

January 1967: A rebellion in Merauke in the south-east of the country is followed by an uprising of 14,000 members of the Arfak tribe in Manokwari, which is declared a 'Free Papua State'. Strafing and bombing by the Indonesians as part of "Operation Annihilation" [!] kills 3,500 villagers. Other groups spring up in Jayapura (the capital), Sorong, Kaimana and FakFak.

February 1969: Uprising at Enarotali, Wissel Lakes/Paniai region in the Central Highlands, in the run-up to the "Act of Free Choice". Unrest prompted at least partly by demands for the withdrawal of Indonesian troops, to make a true 'free choice' possible. Defecting Papuan police reinforce local people and all Indonesians flee the area. Wooden stakes are driven into airstrips, making them unusable. Particularly fierce fighting around Muanemani, involving thousands of people, as Indonesians try to regain control—the area is not 'pacified' until 30th August. "Operation Authority" is introduced to 'prepare' West Papua for its "Free Choice".

2nd August 1969: 1025 Papuans vote unanimously for Indonesia in the impeccably democratic "Act of Free Choice", under very limited supervision by the UN. Indonesian Major Soewondo helpfully explains: "I am drawing the line frankly and clearly… I will protect and guarantee the safety of everyone who is for Indonesia. I will shoot dead anyone who is against us—and all his followers."

1971: Pigs from Bali, infected with cysticercosis (pig tapeworm), are given by Suharto as a 'peace offering', after the brutal suppression of the 1969 Enarotali uprising. Pigs are an absolutely fundamental part of Melanesian life, and cysticercosis was previously unknown in West Papua—many think that this was a deliberate act. Symptoms include psychosis and epilepsy—the majority of the Ekari tribe are infected, and it has since spread to the Dani. The Indonesians won't supply the one drug that cures it, recommending only that the people "change their habits and way of life".

1st July 1971: OPM proclaim a free and independent West Papua—the new constitution is distributed throughout the country.

1975: Papuan oil workers rebel at Ayamura, Sorong, attacking and beating Indonesian and western managers after an order to replace native employees with



Indonesians. (Pertamina—the state-run national oil company—has a policy of not employing Melanesians.)

1977: Indonesians attempt to eliminate OPM bases near the border with Papua New Guinea (PNG), with 10,000 troops and aerial bombardment. Up to 5000 people killed in this offensive.

April 1977: Many attacks on government posts by the Dani of the Baliem Valley, Central Highlands, lasting up till July. Some involve thousands of people, armed primarily with bows, arrows and spears. Landing strips sabotaged again. Indonesians respond with large-scale strafing and bombing, including the use of napalm. Kompas newspaper says "the Baliem River was so full of corpses that for a month and a half, many people could not bring themselves to eat fish."

May 1977: National Indonesian elections. Reluctance to participate is so widespread in West Papua that they had to be postponed, and in some areas abandoned altogether.

July 1977: Amungme people protest at the unilateral expropriation [ie. theft] of 10,000 hectares of their hunting grounds for an expansion of Freeport's Grasberg mine. The pipeline transporting copper and gold from the mine to the harbour at Timika is blown up, along with a bridge and oil storage tanks. Freeport lose several million dollars a day for some months. [Ahhh…] Retaliatory strafing by US-supplied Bronco counter-insurgency aircraft kills 3,000 (Broncos are being used in East Timor at the same time for similar purposes.) Indonesians begin to use chemical weapons around this time.

May 1978: OPM ambush helicopter and capture 7 high-ranking Indonesian officers and civilian officials aboard—later released for weapons and supplies. Bronco bombing raids on villages on both sides of the border with Papua New Guinea cause at least 1500 refugees to flee into PNG.

October 1978: Second OPM kidnap—some more junior officers caught this time. The sinister, Orwellian-sounding "smiling policy" launched by the Indonesians ("territorial smiling" was also pursued in East Timor)—it's a 'winning hearts and minds'-style counter insurgency strategy to detach people from OPM influence.

1980: "Operation Clean Sweep" focuses on the border area, killing over 1000 in June alone; Javanese are later settled here in several showpiece transmigration sites on 'cleared' land. Clean Sweep slogan: "Let the rats run into the jungle, so that the chickens can breed in the coop."

August 1980: 6 women unfurl the West Papuan 'Morning Star' flag in the forecourt of the Governor's office, Jayapura. Arrested on the spot, brutally treated and raped. (There is a widely held belief that if the flag can be kept aloft continuously for 24 hours, it will unleash forces capable of driving out the foreign intruder.)

Late 1981: After Dutch TV crew films hundreds of OPM supporters in the Wissel Lakes area shouting anti-Indonesian slogans, heavy bombing and chemical weapons kill between 2,500 and 13,000 people.

October 1981: OPM assault on Abepura Prison on the outskirts of Jayapura, in an attempt to free political prisoners. Attack on large transmigration site at Genyem, and kidnapping of 58 hostages from Holtekang logging camp—they are held until June 1982. Many OPM suspects are murdered and their heads impaled as a warning.

July 1982: 9 students replace the Indonesian with the Papuan flag outside the provincial assembly building in Jayapura and proclaim a West Papuan state. Four receive 10 year sentences, three 7 years and two 4 years.

Early 1983: Violence breaks out at Pertamina and Conoco's Inanwatan oil exploration site, south of Sorong in the Bird's Head peninsula. A local guide is killed and a French oilman seriously wounded after the companies ignore requests for compensation for the loss of many sago food trees. More unrest follows as local people hear about the stingy compensation that is finally offered. (As of 1988, even this hadn't been paid.)

30th November 1983: Respected Papuan anthropologist, museum curator and folk singer Arnold Ap arrested for 'subversion'. Held until 21st April 1984, after which he was killed—probably by Indonesian soldiers—in an extremely suspect 'escape attempt'. His death sends shockwaves throughout West Papua and beyond.

6th February 1984: 150 OPM sympathisers serving in the Indonesian army desert from the notorious Ifar Gunung military base near Jayapura; they ransack the battalion arms depot and flee to PNG.

13th February 1984: Abortive attack on Jayapura—planned for months, and intended to target the airport, harbour, electricity supplies, fuel dumps and army installations, and to release all political prisoners. But Indonesian intelligence gets wind of the plans. Some actions take place, and a massive crackdown is unleashed, with house to house searches and mass arrests decimating OPM support in Jayapura, a former stronghold. By June more than 10,000 people had fled across the border into PNG.

March 1984: OPM ambush light aircraft at Yuruf border post. Its Swiss pilot is later released after international pressure, while 2 Indonesian passengers are killed on the spot.



November 1984: Refugees facing forced repatriation from PNG back to Irian Jaya (and possible arrest or murder) are subjected to visits from an Indonesian 'verification team', including Irian's deputy-governor. At the large Blackwater refugee camp the team is humiliated, and greeted with a hail of missiles that forces them to run for their lives. [Ha ha!]

January 1986: Unrest is organised to coincide with preparations for the April 1987 Indonesian elections. 900 OPM fighters occupy the important Waris border post near Jayapura for two weeks. The Morning Star flag is unfurled and bridges and roads into the area destroyed, preventing recapture. Bulldozers being used to build the Trans-Irian Highway are blown up, halting work. The Morning Star flag is raised twice in Jayapura.

11th March 1986: Shell installation in Podena is attacked, 50 workers and 16 policemen captured.

April 1986: 3 Indonesian soldiers and 3 Pertamina officials killed at Sarmi. Shell had been carrying out seismic studies in this region for several years, but these attacks forced it to abandon all exploratory activities. There are also raids on police posts in Arso and Abepura at the same time.

August 1986: Indonesians launch "Operation Skewered Meat", deploying 4000 soldiers to wipe out the OPM. The bombing of Highland villages sends another 4000 refugees into PNG.

March 1987: Territorial friction between Papuans and transmigrants boils over into an attack on a transmigration site by 200 Papuans armed with machetes, killing 12 and wounding 17.

March-June 1988: Intense fighting between the army and OPM west of Jayapura and in the Highlands leaves 150 dead from both sides.

14th December 1988: Dr. Thomas Wainggai, along with a crowd of 100, lowers the Indonesian flag and raises the Morning Star in Jayapura. 37 are arrested and 2000 try to attend the May 1989 trial, which is moved to military premises; Wainggai is sentenced to 20 years.

January 8th 1996: OPM takes 26 hostages—connected with WWF surveys for the proposed Lorentz National Park—from a village near the Freeport mine. 15 of them are released by March. The army catches up with them on May 15th—at least 8 OPM fighters die, and 2 of the hostages are mysteriously killed. Many army abuses during the search for the hostages, and serious reprisals afterwards.

March 10th-13th 1996: Thousands of people (including Papuan Freeport employees) riot in Freeport's Tembagapura town, after a Dani tribeman is run down by a Freeport vehicle and his body dumped in a ravine. Many company facilities are destroyed or damaged, along with the government relations office, the shopping mall and other buildings—the airport is also attacked. 6000 march south to Timika and two other company towns (one newly built) on the 3rd day, wreaking more havoc. The mine is closed for two days, and one tribal leader describes the riots as "a war on Freeport and the government". [Sounds good to me!]

March 20th 1996: Riots in Abepura, following Dr. Wainggai's death in prison. Government buildings are attacked, vehicles burned and Abepura market (where transmigration site produce is sold) is burnt down. 4 dead, many injured, many arrests.

Early July 1996: Thousands of protestors burn down government buildings in Nabire: the district head's office, the court, the transmigration and education office and the bank. Attempts to destroy a Pertamina oil depot are foiled by troops. 60 prisoners are freed from the local prison. Apparently the riots are triggered by a decision to recruit for local administration jobs from all over West Papua and from Indonesia.

August 14th 1996: OPM kidnaps 14 employees of the Djajanti logging company near Timika. 2 are found dead in September—the rest escaped or had been released. The army orders all companies operating in the Timika area to accept their protection or shut down.

July 1998: After Suharto is tragically deposed, thousands of students in Biak, Sorong, Jayapura and Manokwari demonstrate for an end to Indonesian rule and raise the Morning Star flag. They are fired on with rubber and live bullets and dozens are detained. On the island of Biak an unknown number are massacred after a five day long flag-raising rebellion—gunned down while still asleep in a pre-dawn raid. Others are rounded up in house to house searches, with some (including children) taken out to sea and dumped overboard while still alive.

August 1998: Unprecedented, all-out 4 day strike of 5000 workers at the Grasberg mine, over broken promises on wage increases. Production is stopped.

(**Sources:** *West Papua: The Obliteration of a People*, Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, TAPOL 1988; *West Papua—Plunder in Paradise*, Anti-Slavery Society Indigenous Peoples and Development Series Report 6, 1990; *Multinational on the rampage: Freeport McMoRan* Supplement to the EF! Journal, undated (1996?); Down To Earth No. 29/30 (August 1996), No. 31 (November 1996), No. 38 (August 1998), No. 39 (November 1998). Many thanks to Down to Earth for all their help, and apologies for the 8 year gap in this timeline between 1988 and 1996.)

Barbed Wire and Barricades
When it All Kicked off in Kiwi



"The dead are marching again, they have new bones to contend, we must be their spirit, give them voice, put prints on these streets no street will ever forget. The rot in the human heart, we're up against it again. Out friends, out to these damned streets again!"

Sometimes on demonstrations and actions we have to think quickly, act on initiative and respond swiftly to what the police or security do. Learning about how these things have worked in the past can help us to make the right decision when it matters. Protesters against the 1981 Springbok tour of New Zealand learnt quickly. They were attempting to stop a tour of the country by the apartheid-era South African rugby team. The NZ government initially budgeted $2.7m for the unimaginatively-named 'Operation Rugby', the aim of which was to push the tour through despite massive public opposition.

The protesters rapidly developed and over the course of a few weeks, what had been a largely pacifist show of passive resistance turned into a co-ordinated and well trained 'army': "The Sunday afternoon strollers became tightly-linked platoons. Their clothing changed. Photos of the Gisborne protest during the 'days of innocence' show balaclavas instead of helmets. Padding and plastic armour were unknown then, they now became the order of the day, together with plywood shields, grappling hooks and other paraphernalia of mediæval war." The protesters linked arms in close-packed ten-by-ten blocks armed with motorcycle helmets, protective padding, home-made shields, smoke bombs and orange boating flares.

The Police

The protesters were confronted with the largest show of police power they had ever experienced. This was the first time riot police, with their long batons, shields and visors had ever been seen in New Zealand. Central to the cops' strategy was the new long side-handled baton, of which they had bought 5,000. Army veterans from Vietnam trained the cops in military camps in preparation for the tour. There was army and Royal New Zealand Air Force support for the police operation: Hercules transport planes were used to move the police about and the army engineering corps laid miles of barbed wire both inside and outside the rugby grounds. The cops used sheep trucks, freight containers and huge dumpster bins full of sand as barricades around the besieged rugby grounds. After protesters learned how to get through barbed wire, they started guarding the wire with cops armed with slashers, "which were said to deal with ropes and grappling hooks".

Protest Tactics

Confronted with this display of force the protesters had to develop quickly: "Steel helmets and face masks were fitted, moulded plastic and padding of every kind was taped to limbs and torsos… for days before, volunteers had manned production lines



which turned out hundreds of plywood shields and thousands of chest protectors made from cardboard tubing."

As well as this straight-forward physical protection, disciplined organisation and training also paid off. The big demos drew 8,000-10,000 people who were organised in squads, or battalions with names like Tutu, Patu and Biko—each had different tasks like blocking motorway approaches or the streets around the rugby ground. One woman said: "We stopped at one point and practised movements. We learnt to retreat backwards without crushing the people behind us. We learnt to stop quickly so the people leading would not be forced into a baton line by the momentum of those behind. We learnt to divide down the middle and jog in lines with our arms linked."





Each group knew where all the other groups were, what they were doing and when thanks to CB radio in cars, all linked to a central HQ manned by the chief marshal. Each member of every squad was issued with an instruction leaflet and map setting out the squad's main plan, fall back plan, retreat position and location of safe houses. When the time came for action bits of paper were passed down the ranks saying there was going to be direct action, those who didn't want to be involved should move to the rear and when the three whistles sound you should run. "They were like parade ground troops" said one police sergeant.

The monitoring and jamming of police radios became routine and the protesters also used spotters up trees with radio contact to look out for the police. There were volunteer medical teams attached to each squad. During the final confrontation of the tour protesters used marine distress flares, smoke bombs and paint bombs. They also came up with the innovative tactic of throwing a fishing net over the riot police to give them time to cut through a chain between the jumbo bin barricades with bolt cutters.

Over the course of a few weeks a passive and fairly symbolic resistance to the tour was transformed into a much more prepared and organised, although still non-violent, resistance. One of the main organisers stated—"This proved to be a politicising experience for many moderates who now found themselves close to a police line for the first time in their lives."



Conclusion

You might well wonder what is the point of recounting all the ins and outs of a battle that took place on the other side of the world nearly 20 years ago. This may all seem like ancient history but it is a little-known and unexpected bit of our heritage that demonstrates some important points. Most importantly, it shows a transformation taking place over the course of a few weeks as people learnt from experience. Something we have seen in this country but on a much more drawn-out time scale.

Also, despite all this organisation and militancy the protesters almost entirely maintained a non-violent position, resulting in some horrific injuries—people quite willingly being beaten to shit in order to gain the 'moral high ground'. People were batoned unconscious by the police and some needed surgery afterwards. Many were hospitalised and put into intensive care—a bit of violence would have saved an awful lot of heads. The "leaders constantly appealed against [violence] and marshals removed anyone who had anything remotely like a missile or a weapon". One of these leaders stated: "There were enough of us on Saturday to totally overrun the police—batons and all—if we'd believed in violence. We didn't."

Well exactly…

However, despite this it is clear that there are perhaps other lessons that we can learn from this and similar episodes elsewhere. Straightforward practical measures that could be adopted. Shields and helmets, colour-coded 'battalions', medics being attached to each squad, learning how to act and move as a group, throwing big fishing nets over the cops… (!?!)

Source: :Tom Newnham—*By Batons and Barbed Wire: A Response to the 1981 Springbok Tour of New Zealand* (Auckland, NZ, Real Pictures, 1981)





Easton Cowboys Go West



"However else they may differ, a football team and a group of armed rebels have one thing in common, from the present point of view: that the real objectification of the action of each member lies in the movement of common objectification." - Jean-Paul Sartre.

At high noon in the mountains of Southeast Mexico the whistle blew for the start of the match. Wearing their now famous red bandanas, the local Zapatista team from the Autonomous Municipality of Francis Gomez walked onto the pitch, complete with tree stumps and small hills. They were all set for a showdown with the visiting team from Bristol, the Easton Cowboys. As the ball flew into the air a stray dog and a couple of horses which had wandered into the goal area fled in fear.

As the Zapatistas rose up in 1994, on the other side of the world the Easton Cowboys, a Bristol based amateur football team, were organising their first international tournament. Breaking down social and economic barriers and creating new friendships, the Cowboys went on to organise an autonomous world cup last year. Teams from the township of Soweto, Norway, Poland, Germany, France, Belgium and Ireland came together in a field in Dorset to play football. By this point, news of the Cowboys' exploits and their belief in 'freedom through football' had spread to the mountains of Southeast Mexico, and they were officially invited to play a series of tournaments in Zapatista communities.



The Cowboys toured the conflict zone for ten days and played four tournaments in all, two in the Aguascaliente (centre of resistance) of Francis Gomez and Morelia and two in the smaller communities of Diez de April and Moises Gandhi. Overcoming the heat, altitude, constant army surveillance and ban on alcohol the Cowboys played 22 games and were

impressed, if not sometimes outplayed by the standard of football in the communities. Roger Wilson, Cowboy centre half said: "We had a great time and the football was excellent. These people have shown us what is possible when you get together with a vision for a better future."

Throughout the tournaments the Cowboys lived and ate with their opponents, exchanged stories and on more than one occasion danced well into the night with their hosts. The arrival of an entire football team and assorted subs and friends in the autonomous zones was met with a great deal of excitement and some bemusement by the Zapatista communities. Some local teams had travelled for hours by foot through the jungle to reach the football pitches. A radio message from one Aguascaliente to another reported that the English team "were the whitest white people they had ever seen."

The warmth of the experience was felt by everyone. Alfredo Jimenez, a team captain from Morelia said: "We are very emotional and excited. This is the first time anyone from far away has come to play us and we hope this isn't the last time football teams from other countries come here."

The Zapatistas have always believed their struggle is part of an international resistance movement. Alfredo Jimenez added: "We rose up so that people everywhere would be united against oppression. Not just in Chiapas, not just in Mexico but all over the world. Our hopes for the future are that the excluded everywhere will get organised."

As the Cowboys collected their thoughts and belongings for the long journey home, some were already making mental plans for a return. All were feeling that this was just the beginning of the Cowboys' relationship with the Zapatista communities. 'Jock of the Jungle', Cowboy centre forward commented while untying his mosquito net, "never has the old saying that football breaks down barriers been so true."



The Zapatista team's rebel yell

In one of the most bizarre football matches ever played, a team from the Zapatista National Liberation Army took on a team of veteran professionals in order to win popular support for their cause. The team from the EZLN—currently engaged in a war with the Mexican government—wore ski masks to protect their identities and avoid possible reprisals. Some of the rebels turned out in army boots. The match played at Mexico City's Jesus Martinez Palillo Stadium was part of a recruitment drive by the Zapatistas.

Green Belt Uprising
Kenyan Kaos in Karura



Kenya's Green Belt Movement was founded in 1977 by Nairobi University professor Wangari Maathai. It has campaigned to restore Kenya's rapidly diminishing forests through the empowerment of rural women. As the forests retreat, women are forced to travel ever greater distances to find the increasingly scarce water and firewood. Green Belt tackled these twin problems by helping the women to plant trees for firewood, and paying them for each one that survived—giving them an independent income into the bargain, when men had previously had exclusive control over family money. This has been an enormous success, with up to 20 million trees planted to date.

Maathai has also been a strong critic of the Kenyan dictator Daniel arap Moi and his corrupt development practices, suffering police beatings and imprisonment as a result of her stand. She has been instrumental in the protection of some of Nairobi's last remaining open spaces—notably Jevanjee Gardens, Uhuru Park and now the Karura Forest. Practitioners of ecological restoration and conservation in the West have a lot to learn from Green Belt's overtly political approach to environmental destruction.

Oct 7th 1998: The Green Belt Movement organised an invasion of the site of a luxury housing development in the 14,000 acre Karura Forest on the outskirts of Nairobi (see pictures below). The land was transferred to private developers by President arap Moi in a corrupt move to raise funds for the Presidential elections. Some of the site's 50 armed guards threw down their weapons and fled—the rest held the manager hostage for an hour while 500 people burnt the site offices, several earth-moving machines, a truck, concrete mixer and construction materials, causing $1 million in damage. They also obliterated drainage channels, began to return the land to its original contours and planted over 2000 trees on site. A further 8000 have been planted since and are being tended by Green Belt. One participant said that "This is the power of the people. They have decided and there is no turning back ... the time for silence and inaction is over." According to another, "Kenyans are fed up ... and are prepared to do anything to reclaim their land." (From *EF! Journal*, December/January 1999.)

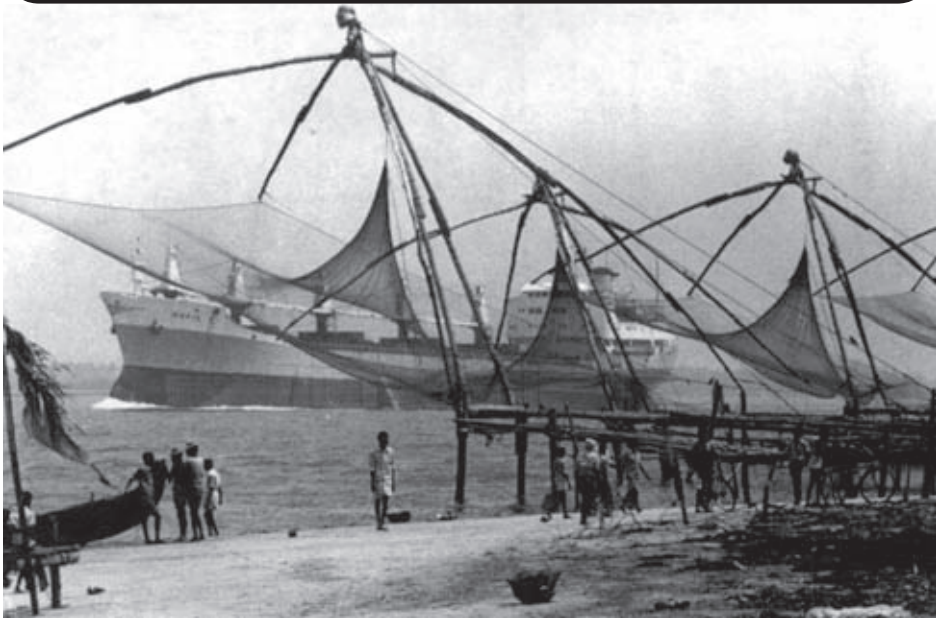
February 1999: Nairobi University students and others fought three days of pitched battles with riot police over the development of the Karura Forest and government corruption. They barricaded one of Nairobi's main highways, attacked police with shouts of "va hii ghasia" ("kill the garbage"), stoned cars and set some on fire. Three MPs were arrested and charged with inciting violence, while Wangari Maathai (having been beaten in January when she tried to plant saplings in the Forest) barricaded herself in her own home to avoid being arrested as well. (*The Independent on Sunday*, 7/2/99.)







Taking the Pisces
Struggles of the Fishworkers of India



India, with her 6000 km coastline and innumerable rivers, lagoons, lakes, reservoirs and ponds, has one of the world's largest populations of fisher people: over 12 million, with two thirds depending on marine fishing and the remaining third depending on fishing in a variety of inland water bodies. It was my priviledge, in 1972, to be appointed parish priest in a small coastal village called Poothura, where all the parishioners were traditional fisher people. My association with the fishing communities started there. I was there with two other priests for 7 years, during which time we got involved in co-op based fishing.

The fishing communities are generally very poor, with low social status and very little clout. Despite having had greater importance in ancient times, fisher folks were relegated to the status of lower castes during the medieval period. Still, the community always enjoyed a certain autonomy and dignity. Fisher people, though highly skilled in their profession, had no access to formal education and they hardly entered into other areas of social life. The education of fisher people and the consequent job-seeking in other departments of life is only a recent occurrence.

From Poothura I began to get in touch with fishing communities all along the Indian coasts. One of the things that has amazed me is the fact that over the centuries the traditional fishworkers have amassed a vast fund of knowledge about resources in their immediate vicinity, and have developed a variety of technologies tailored to the specific ecological niches along the coast. This accounts for the lack of a single maritime fishing tradition in India and hence for the immense diversity of artisanal fishing techniques in the country, the hallmark of which has been their ecological sophistication, rather than techno-economic efficiency.

The women play an active role in the fishing community, as they do in all subsistence economies. Therefore, wherever I have set up fishworkers' organisations, I have always insisted on the participation of women. In the National Fishworkers' Forum (NFF) itself, women play an important role, both at the grassroots level and at the organisational level. There is no evidence to show that women participated at any time in actual marine fishing operations, although women are involved in fish harvesting in the inland waters and exhibit exemplary skills when engaged in shrimp picking. They also gather shellfish from rocky sea banks, and have always been involved in fish processing, distribution and marketing. But recently we came across a woman,



Meenakshi Manna, in West Bengal, who goes to the sea for fishing. Because of her uniqueness, she is honoured in the NFF as a special member of the executive body.

The process of Modernisation

From the time of Independence in 1947, India has attempted to modernise its economy rapidly, inspired by the technological powers of the West. Ignoring the skills and potentialities of the large number of traditional fisherpeople, the government promoted Western technologies like bottom trawling and purse seining for the large scale harvesting of fish. (Trawling, for instance, destroys sea bed habitats, and the trawl owners often take only the valuable fish, throwing the rest back into the sea as dead 'by-catch'.) These new mechanised boats often operated close to the shore, in competition with the traditional fishworkers for both space and resources. In many parts of India this led to a drastic fall in catches for the traditional fishworkers and in some parts even to depletion of certain fish resources. The plight of fish workers as a result of four decades of development is probably worse now than it was before. Only the problem is not that much a result of government intervention in fishery itself, but more the result of government projects meant for other sectors. Deforestation due to industrialisation and other encroachments, the construction of huge dams (like Bargi, Sardar Sarover and so on), pollution of water, siltation and land reclamation, all these have drastically reduced fish availability and harmed the livelihood of inland fisherpeople. Some recent trends in the fisheries development of the country include the great push being given to aquaculture and deep sea fishing through joint ventures with foreign companies.

Organisation of Fishworkers

This threat to our very livelihood has forced the fisherpeople to forge new linkages and organise ourselves to face the threats. The growth of All Goa Fishworkers Union, the Kerala Independent Fishworkers Federation, the Tamil Nadu Fishworkers Union etc is the result of such trends. Through a long chain of hunger strikes, sit-in rallies, picketing National Highways, railway lines, airports, government offices, blocking harbours etc., the fisherpeople were able to obtain marine fishing regulations in most of the coastal states in India—although not without personal cost. For example, in 1985 the fisherpeople were picketing the railway line at Kadakavoor, in support of the fast that was taking place in front of the government secretariat to demand a trawl ban during the monsoon season. Instead of arresting us, the police lathi [long Indian riot batons]charged and removed us by force, beating us up and then putting us into jail—and there have been many instances like this. However, through these ongoing struggles, the fisherpeople forced the government to bring about zonal regulations for the mechanised boats, a night trawling ban, a purse seine ban etc., but these are not strictly implemented so the struggle continues.

Our women have played an important role in all the fishworker struggles. In addition to marching shoulder to shoulder with our men on the issues of trawling, fish depletion, displacement from local markets etc, they have also conducted a number of separate struggles to safeguard their own livelihood. The struggles of the fisherwomen in Kanyakumari and West Bengal against their displacement from net-making as a result of imported Japanese net-making machines deserves special mention. Also, agitations by fisherwomen forced the Kerala government to run special buses to fish vendors, while the Tamil Nadu government allowed the use of public transport for carrying fish. Now the fisherwomen have separate carriages in passenger trains from Thiruvananthapuram to Kollam. Thus the struggles of the fisherpeople have been widespread and extensive, involving both men and women.

Fisheries being a subject handled by the state government, most fishworkers' organisations are at local or at state level, but there is a need to forge a national alliance since many problems have common origins. The National Fishworkers Forum, which had its beginning in 1979, today represents the interests of many of these local movements. It is a federation of





State level registered trade unions in India. Fishworkers, both men and women, working in mechanised crafts and non-mechanised crafts, fish vendors, those who are working in processing plants and those who are working in marine and inland sectors are entitled to become members of the Forum.

The Kanyakumari March 1989

In 1989 this Forum organised "The Kanyakumari March" through the entire coastline of India on the theme "Protect Waters, Protect Life", with a view to creating greater awareness of the environmental problems as well as forging greater unity among the fishworkers.

The march started simultaneously from West Bengal on the east coast and from Gujarat in the west and proceeded towards Kanyakumari, the southernmost part of the Indian peninsula. During the march, people were made aware of the evil effects of deforestation, the destruction of mangroves, coastal industrial pollution, and destructive fishing gears [equipment] that were being introduced because of the process of thoughtless modernisation. Street plays, movies, debates, seminars, exhibitions and public meetings were organised during the march, highlighting local problems and drawing from local talents and leadership. This march was really an enriching experience for me. I was the chairperson of the NFF then and I had to do a lot of shuttling between the east and the west coasts.

On May 1, 1989, the marchers from both sides converged in Kanyakumari. The large gathering of 25,000 fisherfolk from all the coastal states was walking towards the venue of the public meeting, shouting against destructive gears and pollution (including the threat of the proposed nuclear power plant at Koodankulam in collaboration with Russia). The police intersected with the rally, creating a commotion and the fisherpeople ran for their life in different directions, then the police opened fire—injuring 20 people. The police have since filed a case against us [like you do when you've just shot someone!] which is still pending in court—but the atomic plant so far has not been built.

National Alliance of Peoples' Movements

While uniting all local movements of the fisherpeople is essential, it is equally essential to see our problems in the much larger context of struggles by other dispossessed groups. Therefore today there is a new alliance, the National Alliance of Peoples' Movements (NAPM), which is comprised of 157 movements of the dispossessed in the country. This new alliance includes fisherpeople, those displaced by huge dams, those toiling for a mere pittance in the informal sector, (such as small farmers, agricultural labourers, construction workers, Dalits and Tribals) and, in general, all those who are bearing the brunt of the ill effects of Globalisation/Liberalisation. This larger link-up of all the dispossessed is essential to counteract the process by which the powerful groups in society direct development for their own benefit, and destroy both the environment and the livelihood of large sections of the population. Presently I am the National Co-ordinator of the NAPM.

On 27th and 28th April 1998, over 5000 people were gathered in New Delhi, representing 156 Peoples' Movements from all over the country. These were peoples who were displaced because of the so-called developmental activities of multinational corporations and trade, due to Globalisation and the World Trade Organisation. At that gathering they gave the following People's Verdict: "The National Alliance of Peoples' Movements of India, together with people across the world facing displacement, destruction, disparity and discrimination, reject the World Trade Organisation. We oppose all global treaties of exploitation such as GATT and the Multinational Agreement on Investment. We pledge to continue our struggle till we achieve control over our own resources: Water, Land and Forest, by ousting global and national corporate powers."

Joint-Ventures in Deep Sea Fishing—1991

Globalisation/Liberalisation opened up Indian seas to the factory fishing ships under the guise of Joint Venture and Lease. In this scheme, a foreign company has a 49% share and an Indian company a 51% share. The foreign company then brings huge factory fishing ships and 99.99 % of the investment—thus while in theory it is a joint venture, in practice it is a foreign venture. 25,000 such massive vessels worldwide have depleted all the oceans except the Indian Ocean. Already operating in the Indian waters are about 35,000 small mechanised boats and about 200,000 artisanal [traditional, non mechanised] crafts with a wide range of diversified gears suited to the tropical waters, catching varied species in small quantities. The annual Maximum Sustainable Yield is about 3.7 million tonnes of fish, 2.7 million tonnes of which is already caught. So the planners say that there is still 1 million tonnes to be caught—hence the



new fishing policy of 1991. Unfortunately the government forgot the fact that the catch per vessel has gone down in all sectors, even before 1991, as a result of existing over-capacity, destructive gears and pollution. Further, the study of M. Gudicelli, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation consultant, categorically said that there was only 164,000 tonnes of fish available in the deep sea that is commercially available, and this can be caught by the existing fleets if they are diversified.

The new policy allowed foreign fishing vessels into Indian waters beyond 12 nautical miles (18 kms) of the coast. Apart from allowing the duty-free import of vessels, the government also decided to permit the sale of diesel at international prices—meaning that the joint ventures are actually paying much less for fuel than the ordinary Indian fisherpeople. Also the vessels are permitted to transfer the catch on the high seas, thereby avoiding the legal requirement to report their catch at the harbour—leaving the door wide open to over fishing and violation of zonal regulations .

What went wrong in the planning?

The planners failed to take into account the traditional skills of the fisher people when they introduced mechanisation in fisheries. They wanted short-term gains rather than sustained growth. The planners followed a kind of development which has been export oriented, which led to the development of a few at the expense of the majority and a lack of fish for the internal market. Since the sea is a common property, it became anybody's property. The people with the sole motive of profit invested capital and used destructive and over-fishing gears. Production went up along with the increase of production costs. The sea became a place of bitter competition between the powerful on the one side, and the people who are fishing for their livelihood on the other.

The struggle against foreign fishing vessels

The National Fishworkers Forum (NFF) brought together all sections of fisheries in India under the banner of the National Fisheries Action Committee Against Joint Ventures (NFACAJV) and began to protest. It organised the first All India Fisheries Strike on 4th February 1994, prompting the government to suspend the issuing of licences and to appoint the Sudarsan Committee to study the problem. (Although Sudarsan was one of the people responsible for introducing the joint venture scheme in the first place!) The committee submitted a report upholding the 1991 Fisheries policy. So the NFACAJV organised another All India Fisheries Strike on 23-24 November 1994. This led to the appointment of another committee called the Murari Committee—but this was composed of government officials only.

The NFACAJV organised yet another agitation. As the national Convenor of the NFACAJV, I went on an indefinite hunger strike in Porbundar in May 1995. The Murari High Power [ie. top officials] committee was subsequently expanded by including 16 Parliament Members and 6 representatives from the Fisheries sector.

The Murari Committee was composed of 41 members, a diverse assembly of bureaucrats, experts, politicians, activists and representatives from fishing communities—I also was a member. It was divided into 5 groups and went around all the coastal states and took evidences from all sections of the Fisheries Sector. All the 5 groups unanimously recommended the cancellation of all licenses to foreign vessels and a review of the deep sea fishing policy—the whole Committee then gave 6 months time for the government to take a decision on its 21 recommendations. However, since the process was delayed, the NFACAJV organised the 3rd All India Fisheries Strike on 18th January 1996.

October 1993 The NFF and the Small Mechanised Boat Operators of India submitted its memorandum to the Prime Minister of India. This requested that all new licenses issued to joint ventures be revoked, and a deep sea fishing regulation act be enacted to encourage harvesting

of resources in the deep seas on a sustainable basis.

February 1994 The NFF, 31 other organisations and the trade unions of nine maritime states called for a one-day All India Fisheries Bandh [a form of protest when there will be total strike], demanding the scrapping of the joint venture policy. The small mechanised sector and the artisanal sector did not go to sea on 4 February. The main fisheries harbours and fish markets were also affected.



July 1994 Non-mechanised, mechanised and other fishing interests drowned their differences, coming together as the National Fisheries Action Committee Against Joint Ventures (NFACAJV), to confront a larger, common foe. In July, the committee called for a Black Day (during which every one wears a black badge as a sign), and fishworkers in several coastal areas hoisted black flags on their boats, and staged marches and demonstrations.

November 1994 On November 23 and 24, 1994, the fishworkers struck work, and fishing in the maritime states came to a virtual standstill. It is estimated that about one million persons stood off from work at sea, and in the processing plants and markets, as a mark of protest.

May 1995 Fishworkers' leader and Convenor of NFACAJV, Thomas Kocherry, launched an eight-day fast in front of the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi in the coastal state of Gujarat, while across India there were several supportive actions.

November 1995 All the major central trade unions in the country organised a national convention of fishworkers against anti-National Foreign Fishing in Cochin (Kerala), and called for an All India Fisheries strike on January 18, 1996. The NFACAJV called for the blocking of the harbours on the same day, and the response was tremendous, with many of the major ports including Kandla, Mumbai and Kochi obstructed with catamarans and boats.

January 1996 The central trade unions and NFACAJV jointly organised a successful All India Fisheries strike on January 18.

August 1996 Indefinite hunger strike by Thomas Kocherry in Mumbai. The Central Minister for the food processing industry came to Mumbai for talks with the Fisheries Leaders to find a solution.

September 1996 The Central Cabinet accepts the recommendations of the Murari High Power Committee.

February 1997 The Ministry for the Food Processing Industry rescinded the Joint venture deep sea fishing policy, and takes action to cancel the licenses—except for those of the 31 vessels already in operation.

March 1997 The Government appoints the NFACAJV committee to monitor the implementation of the Murari Committee recommendations.

Today, the implementation of the 21 Murari recommendations is still a big question. The new government of 1997 has not shown any interest in them, and the NFACAJV Committee that was working closely with the government has been dismantled. There are still about 40 foreign vessels operating in the Indian waters. We are told that their licenses are life long—but no such facility exists for Indian fishermen: they have to renew their licenses every year. The struggle continues.

Coastal Industrial Aquaculture

Simultaneously, we were struggling against coastal industrial aquaculture. When Shrimati Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister, she wrote to all the chief ministers asking them to protect the coastal zone ranging from 0-500 m area of the coast from sea. On the 19th February 1991 the government issued the 'Coastal Regulation Zone Notification' (CRZ) which recognised the traditional and customary right of traditional fisher people over the coast for the first time. There were 13 prohibitions in this zone, against industrial pollution, dredging, constructions etc. Though initially the government did not see the implications, later it wanted different amendments because of the pressure from the hotel and industrial lobbies. But the fisher people resisted this move and the Supreme Court insisted upon strict implementation of the CRZ Notification without diluting it. But the government was still encouraging activities which went right against its own law. The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and the Ministry of Commerce took the lead in promoting the shrimp industries, thereby violating all



the protections to the coastline enshrined in the CRZ. The economic policy of the government, which was desperately looking for foreign exchange through any means apart from opening our seas to the huge foreign fishing vessels, also invited multinational corporations and other capitalists to establish industrial aquaculture all along the coastline, with the sole purpose of exporting the produce. Now aquaculture has become a big business not only in India but in Asia and many other developing countries.

Development for whom?

Aquaculture has been hailed as holding "much promise for meeting increasing food demands" [Now where have I heard that one before?!] and as providing "important economic and nutritional benefits to many regions of the developing world". The questions that need to be asked are:

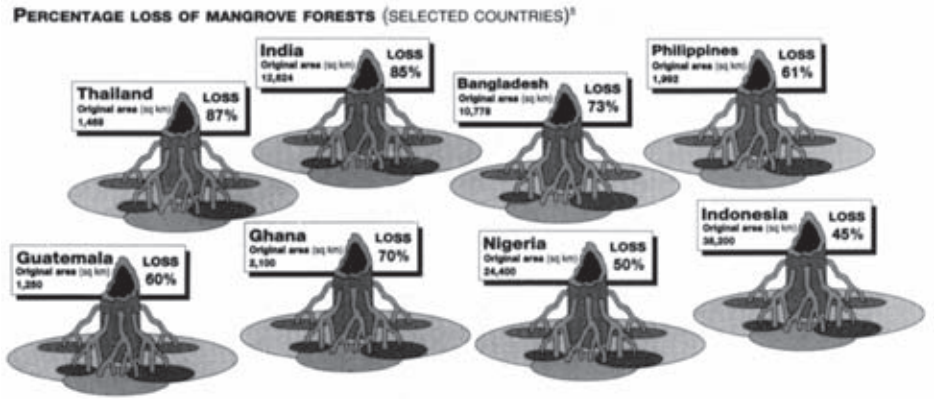
- For whose nutrition is the food produced?
- Who benefits from the sale of the produce?
- How does it satisfy the hunger of the starving millions of the producing nations?
- How does it affect agriculture and marine fisheries?
- What are the ecological hazards encountered?
- Are human rights, particularly the rights of the poor and the powerless (small farmers and fisher people) upheld or violated?

As we probe into these questions we find that industrial aquaculture leads to ecological degradations and human rights violations, while adding further to the wealth of the rich and wetting the appetite of those who are already well-fed. Aquaculture is the cause of salination of land and ground water, and of pollution from the high fertiliser feeds, with practically no possibility of restoration. Agricultural lands become infertile due to the high dosage of chemicals involved, and the shrimp industries move to new areas as the previous sites are exhausted—a kind of rape and run approach. It depletes marine fisheries by its destruction of mangroves and marine forests—each ton of industrial shrimp also requires ten times its weight in marine fish, which is used as feed for the shrimp. It displaces traditional fisher people, small farmers and agricultural labourers. It creates unemployment. It is a social and cultural invasion into the life of the coastal people, whose prior rights in their own place are completely ignored.

The people who were affected by the shrimp culture came together and protested. The movement was strengthened by many organisations coming together. A national action committee was formed which elected me as its co-ordinator. We had to wage the battle on many fronts—at the grassroots level, creating awareness among the people and getting them into the movement; at the level of scientific research, getting scientific data and the interpretation of it by experts and diffusing the findings; and at the legal level, filing a case against the shrimp industries. This was a prolonged battle.

Finally the Supreme Court in its landmark judgement of December 1996 ordered the demolition of all the aquaculture farms because it was a violation of the CRZ Notification of 1991. Workers in the farms to be demolished were to be paid 6 years' wages as compensation, and outside the CRZ zone, no shrimp culture was to be allowed on mangroves, wetlands, forest lands, agricultural lands, salt pans, village common lands etc.

However, the government is trying to circumvent the Court order by bringing in an Aquaculture Authority Bill, and by diluting the demands of the





CRZ Notification of 1991. One of the present concerns of the NFF and other related organisations is to stop the bill and to prevent any change in the CRZ Notification. In 1998 NFF conducted a nation wide coastal survey of all the violations of the CRZ, and is preparing to stage a National Fisheries Strike on May 10, 1999 in connection with this.

World Forum of Fish-harvesters and Fishworkers.

The problems of fisher people all over the world are similar. The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation's reports of 1995 and 1996 have found unequivocally that the fisheries of the world are undergoing the most serious crisis ever recorded. At least seventy-five percent are in or verging on a state of collapse due to the ravages of over-fishing, destructive fishing gears—most particularly by factory trawlers—and the effects of coastal industrial aquaculture, industrial and domestic pollution, and the myriad consequences of global warming. Fishing communities all over the world are under the threat of extinction.

So the fisher peoples' organisations from 35 countries came together in New Delhi from 17-21 November 1997 and formed the World Forum of Fish-harvesters and Fishworkers (WFF). The objectives of the Forum are to protect the fish resources and the fishing communities by promoting sustainable development of fisheries through eco-friendly gears and methods, and to work for a global ban against all destructive fishing (particularly factory trawlers), coastal industrial aquaculture and coastal industrial pollution. I was chosen as the co-ordinator. The WFF has declared November 21 as World Fisheries Day. On this day, every year, all over the world actions, campaigns, studies etc will be organised with the view to protecting the fish resources, and fishing communities, through sustainable small fisheries and by evoking public awareness.

"On World Fisheries Day, we focus on the issues of marine ecology, and of all inland water bodies, responsible fishing practices and the welfare of fishing communities. We celebrate our achievements and express our concerns for the present and our vision and aspirations for the future through various ways and means—workshops, rallies, public meetings, symbolic actions, cultural shows, street plays, exhibitions, art forms like music, dance, poetry etc. using the print and the electronic media, creating awareness and reminding ourselves of our responsibilities." WFF Press Release, November 10, 1998.

A new awareness

The first World Fisheries Day (November 21, 1998) has made a significant mark in many parts of the world. It also happily coincided with the International Year of the Ocean. Fisher people, fish consumers and all those who are concerned about preserving and promoting marine ecology, in many parts of the world, joined together in making this day a memorable one. President Clinton declared November 21, 1998 as World Fisheries Day in the USA. [Hmmmm …] A new awareness among the public has been created.

Our Vision and Goal

Yet, this is no time to rest on our laurels. All we have done is to remind ourselves and the public of the tasks ahead of us. Our vision and goal is to establish the principle and the practice that the natural resources belong to the local people who have cared for them and who have sustained them, while harvesting their fruits for themselves and for others. On the other hand, the process of Globalisation / Liberalisation (which is nothing other than almost total freedom given to people with money to make more money), has allowed anyone with money to move into any place and make more money with scant regard for labour rights, environment and human rights. Thus, the struggle is between two unequal sides; one side having all the power, all the knowledge and all the money, while the other side is devoid of all these.

True Development and Progress

True development, progress or success story should include the following factors: It should lead to fulfilling the basic needs of the poorest, as the priority, and not the greed of the rich. The prior rights of the local (fisher) people and their natural technological knowledge should be respected and built upon. The developmental activity should involve the people who are already traditionally engaged in and are dependent upon it for their livelihood, and should help them to improve on their methods. It should be sustainable, respecting the environment and eco-balance. There should be no socio-cultural or economic invasion by outsiders.

Mobilisation of the people who are affected by the evil of Globalisation / Liberalisation in various so called "development" projects, which are actually downright destruction, is the need of the hour. At the same time, we appeal to the governments for protection. We have to keep the states under check by con-

stant pressure so that the existing laws that recognise the rights of the poor are not tampered with; that no law or policy which gives undue advantage to the rich at the cost of the poor may be passed; and to get the governments to implement their own laws and the verdicts of the judiciary that uphold the rights of the poor and so on. [Best of luck!] We need the art of collaboration and confrontation with the governments, states and elected persons. All this should lead to legislation, at the national and the international levels, which is conducive to the socio-political change that we aim at.

For example, as regards overcapacity of fishing fleets, it is no longer an issue to be proved. We need to be vigilant, rather, to see how various governments address this issue and to see that the overcapacity is not imported or exported. When fish stocks get depleted, the governments often declare a "moratorium on fishing" which punishes the small fish-harvesters—who are already victimised by the licenses given to the big fleets. This should not happen again. The smallest and the least who is fishing for his or her livelihood should never be disturbed. The top most capacity, which has created the crisis, has to give way to the lesser ones and the process should continue until the level of sustainability is reached. This is not a matter of pity for the small fish-harvesters, but it is a question of restoring the social justice which has been blatantly outraged.



Change in ownership pattern

In order to make this vision a reality, a radical change in the ownership pattern is necessary. The people whose livelihood depends on the land or forest or sea should own the same. The fishing communities, which totally depend on fishing for their livelihood, should own the water bodies like the sea, lakes, rivers, lagoons and reservoirs. They should also own their fishing implements. They should manage the water bodies, fish resources, and the sale and distribution of fish. The fishing communities, particularly the fisher women who distribute fish and small fishing implements, assume great importance. The people have to be mobilised to take control over these resources.

For example, the fishing communities should take control over the water bodies. They should take control of the fishing implements and manage the sale and distribution of fish. The traditional and improved traditional aquaculture and pond aquaculture should be encouraged and that, too, should be owned and controlled by the fishing communities. The fish consumers should have direct access to the fishing communities.

Mobilisation of peoples has four distinct elements:

Togetherness:

All those who have a stake in fishing for livelihood (actual fishers and not those who only invest in fishing gears for profit) should come together. All those who are affected by factory trawlers, coastal industrial aquaculture and coastal industries should be brought together. A close relationship should be created between fish consumers and the bona fide fish-harvesters.

Awareness:

Systematic education of the people about the evils of Globalisation / Liberalisation, which has paved the way for overcapacity, destructive fishing gears and depletion of fish, and has made them aliens in their own sphere.

Campaign:

This campaign has to begin in the local areas, leading to the national level and international level. However, we begin this at the local level addressing local issues. The problems and analyses of the local place and its implication at the national and international level should be drawn out.



Training:

The fishing communities—which have been exploited by ruthless money lenders, middlemen and merchants and which have, as a result, lost control over their own harvesting and the fruit of the harvest—should be trained to manage the fish resources, sale and distribution.

Clear vision and Constructive action

The process of struggle and the process of building up should take place hand in hand. There is no blueprint or chronological order. These stages can be over-lapping and may differ from place to place according to each situation. Let us keep our vision and goal clear before us, and forge ahead for the fulfilment of it.

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Bloodbath at Chilika Lake

The internationally important Chilika Lake wetland reserve has been the scene of recent bloody confrontations between local villagers and police. Despite being singled out for special mention in the anti-aquaculture Supreme Court judgement of December 1996, which banned shrimp farms from within a thousand metres of the lake, corruption has allowed the farms to continue in operation. In July 1999 villagers issued a 24 hour ultimatum before dealing with the problem themselves, destroying a magnificent total of eleven illegal farms. This triggered vicious reprisals from the police, who have killed four people and injured thirteen others in their raids on the villages. The fishworkers have responded to this outrage by blocking road and rail links in solidarity, and the city of Bhurbaneswar (the regional capital) was brought to a grinding halt by demonstrators making a human wall—an action which resulted in a massive two thousand arrests.



Kamunist Kranti

In contrast to the huge,often spectacular struggles described here, one Indian revolutionary group has begun to strongly criticise massive, unitary and often union led battles and has evolved a radical alternative. Kamunist Kranti (communist revolution in Hindi) have in their 20 year experience of workers resistance moved from traditional leftist attempts to encourage and lead strikes etc. towards a strategy of small steps. They have basically come to believe that head on conflicts are largely useless- they almost never work in their own terms and are always an obstacle to developing workers' self activity. Large numbers of people seem active, but it is representatives and leaders who think, decide and issue orders to the 'masses'. Demos and strikes are called and controlled by leaders, mass meetings are arenas for fights between union bosses/other leaders, ex-bosses and potential bosses, all of which discourages self activity. Spectacular confrontations also provide larger, easier targets for the state/management to control and manage by dealing with the union hierarchy, or if necessary to crush with brute force.

Against this Kamunist Kranti try to develop and encourage the more mundane forms of resistance they see around them everyday, even amongst the 'apathetic' workers who avoid spectacular struggle. Peoples ties of friendship and family extend from the community into the workplace and effectively form 'affinity groups' .People look out for each other and open numberless channels of communication with other 'groups'- this often allows collective resistance to emerge. In one case toilet breaks were reduced- workers pissed on the floor until they were restored. In another example, workers ordered to use dangerous machinery with no training obediently took their places, but 'accidently' broke the machinery proving that they obviously needed better training. 'The activities of affinity groups span from mutual help to routine resistance against productivity and discipline, to steps of change that question and challeng hierarchy, competition, money relations and wage slavery' Recognising how participants belittle these smaller actions, and despite resisting representation, lack strong enough links with other groups, Kamunist Kranti try to encourage and develop this resistance in a sustained and expansive way.

Kamunist Kranti can be contacted at the radical library they set up: Majdoor Library, Autopin Jhuggi, N.I.T Faderabad 121001, India. Email: Revelrytion@hotmail.com

(This was mostly nicked from articles in the excellent Collective Action Notes paper- POB 22962 Balto., MD 21203, USA)

Big Trouble for Big Oil
Chevron up Shit Creek in Niger Delta

Direct action across the whole of the Niger Delta region of southern Nigeria has been steadily increasing in the late 1990s since the Ogoni mobilisation of a few years before initiated a radical challenge to the Nigerian military state and its funders, the transnational oil companies of Shell, Chevron, Agip and Co. Despite the death of dictator Abacha*, a year of his military successor Abubakar, and finally the installation of civilian president and former military head of state Obasanjo this May, the piracy of resources from the oil communities continues and the pollution and poverty which sparked the protests are unchanged. In fact, Obasanjo himself enacted the Land Use Decree that legislated for the theft of mineral wealth.

The peaceful mass rallies of the Ogonis, led by the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and Ken Saro-Wiwa, were a very real threat to the oil companies across the Delta, and in fact succeeded in forcing Shell out of Ogoni. With the Ogoni activism beginning to be emulated by other ethnic groups from 1993 onwards, the regime in collaboration with Shell brought a ruthless clampdown on the people, killing two thousand, making refugees of tens of thousands of others, and, in 1995, hanging Saro-Wiwa and his eight colleagues. Ogoni was made an example of, but the spirit of resistance was not crushed and agitation for environmental and political justice began to build across the region amongst diverse ethnic groups.

Campaigning by the pan-Niger Delta group Chicoco to make links at the grassroots, and activity by others such as Environmental Rights Action (ERA) has strengthened the resolve of people to demand the rights that have been denied to them all the way through from colonial theft to neo-colonial free trade.

From 1997 occupations of oil flow stations have become increasingly common, with Nigeria's oil output often cut by up to one third for short periods of time.

The desperation felt by so many in the Delta, however, particularly by young men, has led to action of all kinds, from the taking hostage of oil workers to inter-ethnic clashes which have left hundreds dead. These actions play into the hands of the State and oil companies who are happy to continue to work under a military shield, but represent one end of a spectrum of action being taken against those with oil wealth and power.


I REALISED THEN—IF YOU WANT SOMETHING DONE THEN YOU'VE GOT TO DO IT YOURSELF—DIRECT ACTION IS THE ANSWER —
HIT THE BASTARDS WHERE IT HURTS --- IN THE WALLET —

In December 1998 radicals from the Ijaw ethnic group, who comprise around 8 million people living on much of the oil-bearing land of the Delta, met at a traditional Ijaw town to issue the strongest demands yet. The Kaiama Declaration of December 11, issued by the newly formed Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) and with considerable support from the elders, attributed the political crisis in Nigeria to the issue of control of resources, and resolved that all land and natural resources belonged to the Ijaw communities. The military were told to leave the region and oil companies told they would be considered enemies of the people if they called on military protection. The companies were given until December 30 to leave, the date when further action to implement the Declaration was promised.

We, therefore, demand that all oil companies stop all exploration and exploitation activities in the Ijaw area. We are tired of gas flaring, oil spillages, blowouts and being labelled saboteurs and terrorists

we advise all oil companies staff and contractors to withdraw from Ijaw territories by the 30th December 1998 pending the resolution of the issue of resource ownership and control in the Ijaw area of the Niger Delta.

On December 28, as the deadline approached, the IYC announced the launch of Operation Climate Change, to run from January 1 to 10 in the new year, with peaceful action to extinguish gas flares across the Delta. Two warships and up to 15,000 troops were immediately deployed. Peaceful rallies and dances were held across Ijawland, but troops responded in Yenagoa by shooting dozens dead and rampaging through the town, and seizing unarmed protesters for torture and arbitrary detention. Citizens of Kaiama itself also suffered severe repression.

A state of emergency was soon imposed, and meetings and demonstrations banned. Beatings and shootings continued, and many women were raped by soldiers. Several flow stations were occupied and attempts made to shut down the flares. On January 11 hundreds of women from Niger Delta Women for Justice, in conjunction with the IYC, marched to deliver a letter to the military administrator of Rivers State to complain about their treatment. They too were shot at and tear gas used, and many publicly stripped and beaten.

And outside of mobilisation around the Kaiama Declaration, further direct action was being taken against the oil companies. On January 4, soldiers using a helicopter and boats owned by Chevron attacked protesters who were occupying a drilling rig over a pollution compensation claim, killing over fifty people and destroying dozens of homes. A similar incident happened in May 1998 and the company has been particularly obstructive with respect to the investigations into both cases. In fact, Chevron Chair and CEO Ken Derr publicly stated to US shareholders in April 1999 that the company would not officially demand that soldiers refrain from shooting protesters.

Back in Nigeria, Chief Joshua Fumudoh, president of the Ijaw National Council, blamed the violence meted out on the Ijaw on State intransigence and a refusal to negotiate with those at the grassroots. The Kaiama Declaration merely repeated several demands made over and over again by the people, and the only panacea for continued peaceful co-existence in this country is for each ethnic nationality to have meaningful control over its own environment and resources and to use them for self-development in accordance with each nationality's aspirations.

Since the worst atrocities in December and January troops have continued random attacks on Ijaw people and foreign journalists have also been targetted for harrassment and detention. Those living in the Delta have been promised development and meetings to address grievances, but positive change has never appeared from above. Activists feel that no government or oil company initiatives will bring justice, and have pledged that the education and mobilisation will continue. Since the period of mourning announced following Operation Climate Change, the next stage of building the movement has begun. The Kaiama Declaration and the events of December and January are only a foretaste of things to come.

*According to scurrilous rumour, this may have happened as a result of over-enthusiastic use of Viagra. With any luck, other aging dictators with heart conditions will follow suit and start dropping like flies... A potent tool for political change?



OTHER ISLANDS



We Thought it Was Oil—But it Was Blood

The other day
We danced on the street
Joy in our hearts
We thought we were free
Three young folks fell to our right
Countless more fell to our left
Looking up,
ar from the crowd
We beheld
Red hot guns

We thought it was oil
But it was blood

We thought it was oil
But this was blood

Heart jumping
Into our mouths
Floating on
Emotion's dry wells
We leapt with fury
Knowing it was't funny
Then we beheld
Bright red pools

We thought it was oil
But it was blood

We thought it was oil
But this was blood
Tears don't flow

When you are scarred
First it was the Ogoni
Today it is Ijaws
Who will be slain this next day?
We see open mouths
But we hear no screams
Standing in a pool
Up to our knees
We thought it was oil
But it was blood

We thought it was oil
But this was blood

Dried tear bags
Polluted streams
Things are real
Only when found in dreams
We see their Shells
Behind military shields
Evil, horrible evil gallows
called oilrigs
Drilling our souls

We thought it was oil
But it was blood

We thought it was oil
But this was blood

The heavens are open
Above our head
Toasted dreams in flared
And scrambled sky
A million black holes
In a burnt sky
But we know our dreams
Won't burst like crude pipes

We thought it was oil
But this was blood

We thought it was oil
But this was blood

This we tell you
They may kill all
But the blood will speak
They may gain all
But the soil will RISE
We may die but stay alive
Placed on the slab
Slaughtered by the day
We are the living
Long sacrificed

We thought it was oil
But it was blood

We thought it was oil
But this was blood

- Nnimmo Bassey

The long awaited DELTA No. 4 is now out: Ijaw resistance: beyond Kaiama; Killing with Chevron; Dialogue with the devil: how mainstream green groups are selling out; Interview with Vandana Shiva: direct action and indigenous culture; Racism and black involvement in the green movement, and LOADS more. Send some dosh to: DELTA, Box Z, 13 Biddulph Street, Leicester LE2 1BH, UK. Tel/fax: 0116 270 9616. E-mail: lynx@gn.apc.org Web: www.oneworld.org/delta

Tribal Round-up
Last Call for Freedom



There is no shortage of indigenous voices in the mainstream media calling for equal rights, human rights or legal representation. Indeed one could be forgiven for thinking that this is what every indigenous tribal person on the planet wants. Presented here are some voices from those less vociferous, those whose voices are usually drowned out by the 'conference dragons' and their media mouthpieces. This article tries where possible to present people's own words, unsullied by Sunday supplement hackery. Where mediation is unaviodable, it has been done by friends of the people concerned. Consequently, very little of what follows has the seal of approval of the professional classes, and one has to rely on the word of lesser mortals with no letters after their names. Some of the text is disjointed too, but I trust DoD readers have no need of literary devices and will be willing to make the effort.

When tribal people become assimilated and formulate their ideas and ways of organising into something similar to ours, they find their message becomes much more palatable to the Western mind, naturally. When the message fails to meet with the currently fashionable view of what is politically correct, those who rigidly refuse to change and be like us are persecuted by virtually everyone, even the 'aid' organisations who arrogantly assume that everyone wants 'development'.

Yes, there are still some people around who don't want our generous gifts of democracy and human rights because they come with a price: development. Apparently human rights don't include the right to be left alone without any outside interference. In the much acclaimed UN Declaration of Human Rights, for example, is a clause which allows missionaries to go just about anywhere and interfere with anyone they want to. Nowhere does it suggest a right not to be missionised. Our culture believes that people should be able to live or visit wherever they choose. In some other cultures this is not the case. It isn't a question of who is right and who is wrong; we simply have no right to impose our world-view on other cultures, though this is what we have done throughout history.

I hope it will become clearer through the following articles that our cultural imperialism has not diminished one iota from the grand old days of empire. The early colonists genuinely believed that they were doing good work, bringing the right way to live to ignorant people. This attitude has has merely been



couched in a different language. After the corporate monster—along with its forward guard, the missionaries—rampages its way across the last remaining wild places in much the same way as the old imperialists did, an insidious second wave of troops—the aid agencies and do-gooders—sweep up the remnants of opposition. They ensure that no trace of the old ways is left, replacing human diversity with a monoculture.

The aid organisations are far more difficult to criticise than corporations. Like the old pioneers, they genuinely believe that they are superior to their victims. For example, in spite of the evidence that our agricultural systems are ludicrous (see DoD 7, p.40) they pompously parade around places they know nothing about, telling traditional farmers who have known the land for hundreds of generations that they are wrong and must farm differently. This is mostly based on a relatively few short years shut up in concrete buidings in Western cities reading books.

We are subjected to a barrage of requests to give money to agencies to help these 'poor people'. Experts pontificate at great length about how clever they are and how much the 'developing' economies need their help. Yet only rarely do we hear from the people themselves, and when we do it is usually a member of a specially cultivated elite group speaking, not one of the unfortunate 'beneficiaries' at the dry end of the gravy train. We only hear about those people when loads of them die from some crop disaster. And then what? More experts asking for more money. They have no shame!

There are other voices though. They rarely get to speak at the big conferences because nobody will pay for their tickets. They don't get big spreads in the *Guardian* because they don't say the right things. They speak strangely; they don't 'make sense'. Their demands are 'unrealistic': they don't want justice and representation, eco-tourism, fair trade or cultural exchange. Basically they just want us to fuck off back where we came from and leave them be. This doesn't make good copy, even in progressive papers.

In an activist world dominated by froth-spluttering denouncers of violence they dare to say the 'f' word (fight). It's fine to parade around in quaint costumes demanding justice, or fly around the world saying the right keywords and making interesting presentations in expensive hotels in nice locations, but kidnap a few corrupt government officials, and maybe kill one or two and suddenly all your rich friends have disappeared (along with your money usually).

Some people, like the Zapatistas (p xxx), cleverly manage to escape this puritanism and fire our imaginations, but most have no voice, and no money for what they really want—weapons to defend themselves, for example. Many have gone already, their tribes' names listed somewhere in some dull book, and the rest of humanity may survive long enough and learn enough to lament their passing. Meantime, others are still alive and still fighting. They are wild humans, and they need people like us as allies because all the other potential allies have agendas they want to impose in return for help. They are fighting for freedom, not for rights within our culture. Since freedom doesn't exist in our culture then theirs is truly the same struggle as ours, for anything within our culture is slavery and domestication. Only in wildness can we be free.

Let's fight with those who still know what freedom is, against those who would destroy it, or want us to settle for less. Let's free ourselves once and for all from this miserable death-grip of industrial civilisation.



Tourist guide exhibits circumcised Maasai. Genital mutilation was introduced by missionaries.



Akha: Sterilization and Blood Theft By Missionaries

Rumoured widely for many years, witnesses have now stepped forward who claim that the American Baptist Missionary Paul Lewis sterilized more than 20,000 Akha Hill Tribe women in Burma's Eastern Shan State alone. This was done secretly without the approval of the Burmese government by requiring the women to go into Thailand for the procedure and using people in the Church hierarchy to organize the movement of the trusting women, who had little education as to what the long-term effects on their lives would be. Although Burma is much maligned for human rights violations, the activities of Western organizations such as this are disregarded by the same agencies making human rights reports.

In addition, blood was stolen from these women for resale, taken during the sterilization procedure. More than 3,000 of the women have died. Many developed a weakened condition and lost weight. The pain related to the surgery did not subside and in the end they died. Now the children of many women have died and obviously they are unable to have more.

In Akha traditional culture, five people serve as the government in one village. This multiperson leadership system in villages was eliminated and replaced by single pastors who rule the villages with an iron fist, allowing no dissent or return to the traditional ways.

The following is severly condensed from the Akha response to the issues of how their language has been manipulated and how they were deceived over the sterilizations, which continue to this day. This was written by a number of Akha who fear for their safety should they make their names public. Threats have already been made by people involved with the Protestant missions. Send a donation to the Akha Heritage Foundation for the unedited text.

Of the seven ladies who had sterilization in our village, two passed away shortly after. They went to recieve sterilization because they were poor. After being sterilized, since their poverty demands them not to stop their job, they had to face the new disease of feeling pain all the time. Later, they pass away. Those who survived, many are still suffering from various kinds of diseases and social abnormalities. Some became opium addicts, some became very thin and suffer from bleeding. To me it seems like a systematic way of killing our hill tribe, to annihilate us. Why I dare say like that? As they are experts in these fields, they know ahead for sure that those who underwent the operation would not be able to to do hard labor in the rest of her life. Knowing it properly, they persuaded hill tribes women to undertake such an operation. Now I feel very bad for my suffering people. Whom shall I blame—my poor people or those so-called expets who jumped in with lots of money as if they were our benefactors?

Apart from giving money to each patient, [Lewis] also gave all the traveling expenses to them and 3,000 Baht to the agent for bringing the women in. It became a good income for them. Because of this it seemed that many women received only the good stories of what would follow after sterilization; nobody told them the bad side effects.

Especially in Thailand, due to the high levels of prostitution, under the name of safeguarding young women, boarding schools for girls sprout up. But then the girls no longer feel to marry Akha men. So where will the Akha children come from and what will happen to our people and villages? They do not come back to the villages. In this way the Akha women are being taken away from the Akha world. That is why the present education being given by the missionaries should be closed down quickly, then we will be able to preserve ourselves.

Regarding religion, at the beginning it seemed to be very good. Later, it turned out to be division among the people. Some became Catholics, some Protestants, some still holding their ancestors offering while others became Buddists. All these, they could not face to one another. Now we want to raise a question, how good is the Christianity then? If that is good enough, why there are so many groups, teaching about Jesus and yet fighing one another? First they divided our people now they are dividing our villages and families. We seem to be like a prey for them. Better not to have one of them than having all of them.

They seemed that they did not show any interest for our culture. Why? They just eager to build big churches in every village. We do not know why the missionaries are trying to throw away our culture so eagerly. Isn't there anyting good about our culture? Why then are they making businesses by selling Akha head dresses and other things also? Making lots of money by writing about our people, culture customs and history? After all, to be able to write

such things, from where do they get all these informations? Indeed, these are given by my people and they are still poor. What about those authors? They become rich and well known to the world for writing and knowing about us.

The missionaries quickly seized upon the killing of twins at birth in the Akha culture as a means to villify the whole culture and turn many Akha against anything and everything Akha. Divide us—conquer us? In every culture we can ever find in the world, some part of them will not be 'up to the mark' of modern society, some may seem to be with error. In the Old Testament there are human sacrifices, and cannibalism is still going on in some parts of Africa. In that way, our culture also sometimes seems to be cruel. Instead of understanding our culture, missionaries mock us. In those days people were waging war in our land all the time and migrating from one place to another. If the mother had to care for two or three at the same time, it would be very hard for the family. They might have their own reasons for all of this. Today I would like to ask all those concerned about it: since killing is wrong indeed, why then abortion is going on all the time, especially in the US where all the missionaries come from? Abroad they are sterilizing ladies, this is also a strange thing for us here.



Manee hunter-gatherer with gibbon

Due to those who exaggerated our culture in a mocking way, when they converted an Akha village to Christianity, they burnt our gates, ancestors shrines, swing [representing god's creation of humans] etc. They also stopped us from doing traditional burying and naming. Now a newborn child will be named in the Christian way by a pastor, eliminating our ancient system by which we count our generations back. Now the children cannot do that. No more recitations, no dancing allowed. In fact all these things enabled Akha people to preserve their culture and language over 1500 years already. If these can keep us for such a long time as a group of people, we don't think they would be very bad. That's why we want to ask you, whether to keep them instead of condeming them and throwing them all away?

When the missionaries arrived, they formed an Akha elite, taking them away from the ordinary people, giving them the best education and best facilities in the world. That is why their small group could buy the latest cars one after another. They became very powerful. They could pinpoint anybody they want and start ordering what they like. Now these young leaders are replacing old missionaries. They think that they belong to the upper class; they don't want to admit they came from the same people.

We have no proper leader, no country, no land to be able to claim as ours, no wealth, no education, numbers also very limited. To such a poor people why do they do that? It seems that they are having two faces; under the title of help they suppress us. To the world, they gained their reputations as benefactors of disappearing tribes. They built their reputations on us for many years. The way they behaved on us seemed as if we did not know about god before they arrived here. Why do missionaries think they are the only ones who can perceive god? If there is no good teachings among the Akhas, we are sure we cannot have survived 'til this day.

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Hadzabe: East Africa's Last Hunting and Gathering Tribe

A while ago two people from the Non-Development Organisation FPCN (see contact pxxx) and one from FDN Germany, visited their friends the Hadzabe, around lake Eyasi, in northern Tanzania. The following is condensed from their account.

Our trip began from Arusha and headed north-west via Karatu, from where we left the road that circumnavigates the Ngorongoro Crater National Park and headed south west to Mongola.

At the southern end of Mongola were the first Hadzabe community we stayed with. In this place the traditional lifestyle of the Hadzabe can no longer continue due to the proximity of the neighbouring settlement. The area was tradtionally a watering hole used by the Hadzabe. Now with the existence of expatriate settlers and the establishment of newly formed village councils, the Hadzabe are not even allowed to go to the watering hole, except when the village council and warden have arranged a party of tourists to watch them sing and perform. While a 20-strong tourist group pay 300,000TSh to the council for filming, only 10,000TSh would be paid to the total Hadzabe community.

The village has a 25-councillor-strong committe and not one Hadza. When asked about this, Gudo Mahiya, a respected Hadza spokesperson said "we are not interested in changing our culture to conform to the policy of the aggressors". He added that "even in Arusha there were 250 councillors, but the Hadzabe still have no representation, nor wish to have". He does want to go to Arusha to protest about the council here. When asked about the farming and cattle introduced by the settlers he said, "We do not want cattle, just wild animals to hunt and water that we can drink".

Is it right that a people should be driven to extinction just for not wanting to change and adopt the Western mentality of profit and greed-driven motives? Needless to say we continued refusing to pay the campsite fee for visiting and giving humanitarian aid to our friends. Even after the police were called by the campsite warden, the police couldn't believe why they had been called and laughed about it at the end with us. The protest was felt and noticed and FPCN International advises any visitors to the Malete spring to do likewise, until such time as the Hadzabe are allowed full access to the water.

Two of the occupying expatriate settlers, Ms Jeannette Hanby and David Bygott live on sacred Hadzabe ground in denial of the rights of the Hadzabe, claiming they have never inhabited the area despite it being the only spring for 20km. They can be written to at S. L. P. 161, Karatu, Tanazania. They claim to be ecologists.

There are three situations that FPCN International was asked by this Hazda community to present to the international community;

Case 1: Enslaved Prostitution

Through the intermediaries—European priests and "sisters"—Sabina's sister Mele Abande and

Arabunna: No Nuclear Waste on Our Land

The Arabunna people, living in the area the Austalian state calls Billa Kalina are fighting against a nuclear waste dump that is proposed for their homeland. The following is a short extract from their statement.

In the past we were forced to leave our lands by the killing mobs who massacred our countrymen, our mothers and our little children. The racist system forced our Old People to leave so a few of us would survive. You see our lands as remote just like your principle of law terra nullius. This is not an uninhabited wasteland for your waste. It is our home. We became refugees but always maintained contact with our country. That is only temporary and now we need to have our land back, so we can look after it the proper way and heal ourselves. We plan to go back there and take away the evil. We have to go back whether the land has been poisoned or not. We've got nowhere else to go. Our life exists with our land. It is our foundation. It is our past, present and future.

The time has come for all Australian people, if we are going to move forward, to do it without the Government.... We need to get rid of the way these things are done. Destroy this evil government. Dissolve this Parliament, the Crown. Dissolve it completely, it doesn't fit in this land. Discard this artificial economy and legislation of cruel evil projects. Discard this culture of death and worship of war and greed. We have to maintain our old values that have been tried and tested over thousands of years.

Kevin Buzzacott, Aboriginal Elder and Spokesperson of the Arabunna People, to National Radioactive Waste Repository Project.



The Batec, Negritos on the Malakka peninsula. Malays have stolen the Batecs' land and killed almost all of them. There are fewer than 800 left.

Salibogo's daughter along with many women have been tricked into prostitution by being taken to Arusha with the promise of work, only to find themselves enslaved in prostitution. FPCN proposes to act on the wishes of the Hadzabe and bring all the held Hadzabe women back to their homeland.

Case 2: Enforced Schooling

There have been times when the military has searched for Hadzabe children hiding in the bush to escape the duty of being schooled. Hadzabe girls often complain about being raped by the teachers in the Endamaga school. This happens even with the Hadzabe mothers. Later the Hadzabe girls are compelled into prostitution.

FPCN has previously been successful taking back some of these unlucky girls to their bushhomestead and families. But if caught again, these escapees have to fear severe coporal punishment. This kind of discipline is very common in these schools. When asked, all but a handful of the Hadzabe say that this schooling has a negative effect on them and is of no benefit.

Some Hadzabe have even been taken to colleges in Dar es Salaam. Currently they are all without jobs and are now even more frustrated and irritated. They have been uprooted from their own society, and the new one is unable and unwilling to fulfill its promises. One really must try and not see it from our Western educated standpoint. For these people that are not even on the bottom rung of the surrounding social hierarchy, what use is learning English or reading Swahili or even mono agriculture for that matter? They already know everything they need to know to carry on living as they want to.

Case 3: Bad Religion

Many times white parsons tried to baptise the Hadzabe and to destroy their traditional beliefs and lifestyle. FPCN tells the Hadzabe that these missionaries are just business men who have often accumulated quite some wealth from their job. The hatred against these strangers grows among the Hadzabe. FPCN stands ready to sanction and assist with the burning out of churches on Hadzaland following a similiar successful explosion that occurred at Sanola [the church there was completely destroyed by local tribespeople].

After two days with them it was decided to visit the Hadzabe communities on the west side of the

dried-out Lake Eyasi, circumnavigating the lake on the way. Approximately 40km down the eastern side we stopped to visit and give food to what appeared to be the least well-off community so far. This clan at Kambia ya Simba had the unenviable position of sharing a green and stagnant waterhole, some three hours walk from them, with the surrounding Barabaigs' cattle. Even one of our party, a journalist from Norway, found himself infested with worms after drinking from the source. It was clear to us all that most of the Hadza children had to permanently endure the same affliction.

Several hunting trips were made to ascertain the level of available game that these people largely depend on. The only recorded sighting in their region was a couple of dik dik (small dog-sized mammals) to feed a population of around 200. The result is that these people are soley dependent on the gathering of the three types of berries they are lucky enough to have around them.

After two abortive attempts to go south around Lake Eyasi and being forced back by rain, it was decided to visit important camps around the Sanola On first impressions Sanola didn't appear to be as welcoming as the previous camps. That was explained later due to the work of anti-traditionalists like Bruce, a CUSO field worker, who had just the week before been hunting in the area with the district game warden from Embola.

We were also told that Momoya Muhidoti, the "camp site warden" at Chem Chem, had also been hunting with Arabs and Germans. It is also known by the inhabitants of Sanola that Bruce is responsible for the killing of the last Rhino in this area. A nice achievement for an 'aid' worker! During his visit the week before, Bruce had discussed with the Hadzabe how they had stopped all the white trophy hunting in the area. That is quite an accomplishment when you take into account that there really isn't any game left to hunt.

Sanola, once rich in wildlife, game and fresh water now has none. The displaced Barabaig herders with the expanding livestock numbers have completely taken over the water resources. The river, like Lake Eyasi is in the main dried out during the dry season. The Barabaig have erected small dams and water traps for their livestock, creating the same polluted water, not fit for human consumption, as found at other camps. We asked and explained to the Barabaig that this cannot continue. It is feared though that more requests will be needed to persuade them to use only some of the available water holes. Methods of persuasion will be discussed, agreed upon and action taken. Barabaig settlers and cattle are not the only intruders; the Maassai are also bringing more and more cattle into the region as a result of their expulsion from the Ngorongoro Crater, to make way for a dollar-earning national park

The overall effect has been so devasting that the game the Hadzabe were dependant on have all but gone. Add to this the adverse effect of the few water holes, all infected by the cattle, and you are left with a worm-infested population dependant on berries for their moisture and nourishment. The net effects were clear in the blown up stomachs and infections suffered by the children.

In conclusion: it is the opinion of FPCN International that the biggest single detrimental effect that is dispossessing the Hadzabe of their livelihoods and homelands, is the western world's model of nation building, with its universally adopted legal system.



An Aeta hunter with a veeery long blowpipe



"We're Still Here and We Haven't Forgotten Anything"

The Kogi are a South American tribe who choose to cut themselves off from tourism and the rest of the Western invasion. They live in a remote mountain region. Some years ago they summoned author Alan Ereira and a BBC film crew to come and receive a message for us, the destructive 'younger brother'. In their stories, younger brother went off traveling, before understanding the world, and is now wrecking everything for the whole family.

They have people in the tribe, called 'Mamas', who resemble what anthropologists call shamans. Known before birth, these ones are born in a cave away from the village. They are raised by the other Mamas and never leave the cave before seven years of age. The outside world is described to them in stories, but they never actually see it. Their world consists of what they can concieve themselves. When they go outside and see the real world in all its complexity, they are overawed by it and have a direct knowledge of their own limitations compared to the whole. It's unlikely that this is something we in the West can appreciate. Here is their message to us. References to 'Mother Earth' may put off some people, but remember these are not hippy wannabees.

"We work to take care of the world. We respect the Mother Earth... We know that the land is our Mother Earth. If we plant an orange tree or any type of tree and then pull it up by the roots it will die. Digging out the earth's gold is the same thing. It could die. We've all heard many stories that the world is dying. Why is it dying? It is because they have robbed so many tombs. The world is like a person. Robbing tombs, stealing its gold, it will die. We don't take out the Earth's gold. We know that it is there but we do not take it. We know from our divinations that the advice of the Mother is not to take the gold. We know where it is but we decide only to make offerings to it.



"How is it that we are able to live? Without blood we cannot live and without bones we cannot walk. Here all the Mamas are in agreement about what it is we are going to say and how to speak. If I cut my foot off I cannot walk. When they (the Younger Brothers) dig into the earth and take its gold it is the same thing....Gold has its own thought and it can speak. It is a living being. They must stop stealing it.

"If they take all the gold the world will end. The Mothers of the banana trees, of all the trees and of all the birds, they have all been stolen. They are cutting off the flesh of the Mother's body. They have taken everything. They have stolen the spirits of all things from the Mother. They are stealing the very spirit and thought of the Mother....

"It is the mountains that make the waters, the rivers and the clouds. If their trees are felled they will not produce any more water. We do not cut down the trees that grow by the rivers, we know that they protect the water. We do not cut down huge areas of forest like the Younger Brother does, we cut small clearings for our fields. The Mother told us not to cut down many trees so we cut very few, tiny patches.

"If the Younger Brother keeps cutting down all the trees, there will be fires because the sun will heat the earth....We are the Elder Brothers so we have to think clearly....

"Younger Brother, stop doing it. You have already taken so much. We need water to live. Without water we die of thirst. We need water to live. The Mother told us how to live properly and how to think well. We're still here and we haven't forgotten anything.

"The earth is decaying, it is losing its strength because they have taken away much petrol, coal, many minerals. Younger Brother thinks, 'Yes! Here I am! I know about the universe!' But this knowing is learning to destroy the world, to destroy everything, all humanity....

"The Mother is suffering. They have broken her teeth and taken out her eyes and ears. She vomits, she has diarrhea, she is ill.

"If we cut off our arms, we can't work, if we cut off our tongue we can't speak, if we cut off our legs, we can't walk. That is how it is with the Mother. The Mother is suffering. She has nothing.

"Does the Younger Brother understand what he has done? Does he?"



Dayak Resistance in Kalimantan

Our friends in Indonesian occupied territory are asking for help in the long-running conflict in East Kalimantan between the indigenous community of Benuaq Dayaks and the interanationally financed company, PT London Sumatra. LonSum has been clearing Benuaq forest lands to set up large-scale palm plantations. The local people's efforts to protect the land on which their livelihoods and culture depend have been met with violence and intimidation by the state.

The Dayak people traditionally grow rice, cultivate rattan and collect fruits, medicinal plants and honey. They also weave baskets and mats. They are being destroyed by logging, plantations and coal mining. The destruction of forests has bought widespread hardship. Oppostion is met with threats and intimidation. The conflict has been going on since LonSum started operations in the Tanjung Isuy area in 1996. The company has violated the community's customary land, destroyed their food-growing gardens and desecrated Dayak burial sites.

The company initially said it only wanted a small amount of land for a seedling nursery but soon built a road and cleared large areas for plantations. The villagers made it clear that they refused to hand over their land. They'd also heard of the bad experiences of communities further south in Pasir, West Kalimantan and Sumatra, who lived in debt after giving up their land to become oil palm workers.

Several Dayak communities in the Tanjung Isuy area took direct action. For five months, villagers occupied one of LonSum's base camps in an attempt to get the company to address their demands.

November 1998

Sixty-four people representing nine villages in the Jempang and Muara Pahu sub-districts, went to LonSum Indonesia to present their demands for compensation of Rp250 billion (approx US$25 million) for their land, crops and damage to their burial sites. The head of the company fled rather than hold dicussions. The people occupied the company's offices for the next two weeks, preventing all operations and immobilising a number of vehicles. Meetings were held with local authorities, who ordered the people to leave the site and release the vehicles.

December 1998

As the head of LonSum refused to come back and hold negotiations, villagers took their demands to the offices of LonSum International at Muara Nayan on Dec 2nd. Here too, the head of the company ran away so the people occupied the base camp. After ten days, the company did not resond so the people closed down its operations, seized some heavy equipment, including bulldozers and trucks, and set fire to part of the base camp. Two official buildings, a fertiliser store and some workers' accomodation were destroyed.

Around 30-40 people refused to leave the base until their demands were met by the company, but LonSum's representatives just told them to take their complaints to the head office in Medan. The local government offered to mediate between the two parties, but this was rejected by the Dayak. On Dec. 27th five military vehicles carrying 70 armed Mobile Brigade personnel (Brimob) came to the camp to arrest one of the protestors, but they were repelled.

January 1999

LonSum showed no signs of resuming negotiations, and villagers were intimidated by Brimob. Instead of addressing the villagers's claims, the authorities showed more interest in prosecuting them for damaging LonSum's property and holding the heavy equipment. Various people purporting to be from the police or military had been asking questions at a local NGO office and in and around the occupied base camp. Other base camps owned by LonSum and its contractors were reported to be under Mobile Brigade guard.

February 1999

The action continued as did the intimidation. Community leaders sent letters to the head of the armed forces, government ministers and the national commission for Human Rights (KomnasHAM) appealing for justice. A delegation of community and NGO representatives also went to KomnasHAM to represent the villagers' case. KomnasHAM issued a statement that the local government and security forces should be fair and not simply support the company.

April 1999

On April 24th, two villagers from Perigiq were stopped on the road by eight men in civilian clothes who handcuffed them and took them to PT Gelora Mahapala's base camp. They were then taken to the police station in Tenggarong (the adminstrative centre for Kutai district), where they were roughly treated before being interrogated by police. Both have now been charged. (The original document only cites the reference numbers of the alleged offences.)



May 1999

Twenty-four fully armed Brimob personnel and six civilians armed with machetes attacked the Muara Nayan base camp at 6 am on May 7th. The local community was in the middle of a cultural ceremony, but the security forces scattered sacred artefacts all over the place and terrorised the people. The camp was cleared and many people fled to the forest. At mid-day, two NGO staff plus two locals who had not heard about the raid came to discuss the issue of the two men who had been abducted from Perigiq. The security forces fired at them and forced them to go to the PTGelora Mahapala base where their non-uniformed captors told them they had been hired by the company. When the local head of police arrived, he arrested the two villagers and ordered the NGO people to leave the area by the next day. That evening the security forces raided the village of Perigiq, where again there was shooting and the terrified inhabitants ran off into the forest.

Since then there have been no more reports as NGO staff have been forbidden to go to the Jempang sub-district and villagers are too frightened to leave their homes. Some people are still missing, but many are hiding in the forest. There are rumours of more police raids, and the head of East Kalimatan's police has issued a 'shoot on sight' order if there are any further demonstrations. The Benuaq Dayak are extremely offended that their traditional ceremony was completely disrupted by the Moblie Brigade and paid thugs. The ceremony had been going on since Febuary and was important to ensure the well being of the village of Muara Nayan.

The local police reported that they had 'freed' all the equipment held by the protestors occupying the base camp. Eight people have been arrested on charges of occupying, damaging and burning company property. On May 9th, the company resumed operations. On May 27th, The East Kalimantan Indigenous Dayaks Association (PDKT) met the police chief, LonSum representatives and staff from the local government of Kutai District. It was agreed to start the process of conflict resolution, though it remains to be seen what compromises will be expected by the Dayak.

Local people suspect that LonSum and its contractors have been allowed to operate illegally for the last three years due to corruption. In order to clear the land, any company is officially required to have a land use permit issued by the Minister for Forestry & Plantations and the Land Board. However, LonSum only has a letter giving 'permission in principle' from East Kalimantan's governor. The company has cleared 16,500 hectares. The commercially valuable timber is sold and the rest burned. It is likely that the local government benefits directly from LonSum's operations through shares and taxes. As yet, no legal action has been taken against the company. The local police have dropped a case against LonSum for contributing to the disastrous 1997/8 fires by illegal burning, 'due to lack of evidence'.

PT London Sumatra

An Indonesian plantation company with its head office in Medan, North Sumatra, 'LonSum' as Indonesians call it, was founded 90 years ago as a British company. It later became a subsiduary of British palm oil traders Harrison and Crossfield, which sold out in the mid-1990's. It is now publicly listed on the Jakarta stock exchange. LonSum still has international connections through foreign purchasers of shares, loans, and supplies to Northern consumers (us!). Most exports of palm oil from Indonesia to the European Union go through Germany and the Netherlands.

LonSum now has 54,477 hectares of plantations, half of which are palm oil, in North Sumatra, Java and Sulawesi. It also has rubber, tea and cocoa plantations plus 15 processing factories. New estates are expected to exand the area under LonSum's control to 70,000 ha by 2000.

The company exports 60% of its production and so it hasn't suffered from the economic crisis when the government, encouraged by the IMF/World Bank is pushing exports. Foreign customers include Singapore Tong Teik Pte Ltd, Anglia Oils Ltd and Lewis & Peat. Its expansion last September into palm oil plantations in South Sumatra (98,750ha) and East Kalimantan (15,000ha) was financed by a $122 million, five-year syndicated loan so the company does not have the short-term repayment problem of many of its rivals. International investors include the Dutch-based Rabobank. Unconfirmed reports cite the involvement of the UK-based Java Trust Fund.

In addition to the confrontation between LonSum and the communities in East Kalimantan over land, there have been similiar conflicts in South Sumatra (Mambag, Musi Rawas) and North Sumatra (Pergulaan, Deli Serdang).

More detailed information on Rabobank and the London Sumatra is availabe from wakker@aidenviroment. antennae. nl



Basic Call to Consciousness

Extracted from The Haudenosaunee Message to the Western World

The Haudenosaunee, or the Six Nations Iriquois Confederacy, has existed on this land [now Mid-Atlantic states of US] since the beginning of human memory. Our culture is among the most ancient continuosly existing cultures in the world.

Our essential message to the world is a basic call to consciousness. The destruction of the Native cultures and people is the same process which has destroyed and is destroying life on this planet. The technologies and social systems which have destroyed the animal and the plant life are also destroying the Native people. And the process is Western civilization…

The processes of colonialism and imperialism which have affected the Haudenosaunee are but a microcosm of the processes affecting the world. The system of reservations employed against our people is a microcosm of the system of exploitation used against the whole world. Since the time of Marco Polo, the West has been refining a process that has mystified the peoples of the Earth.

The majority of the world does not find its roots in Western culture or traditions. The majority of the world finds its roots in the Natural World, and it is the Natural World, and the traditions of the Natural World, which must prevail if we are to develop truly free and egalitarian societies.

It is necessary, at this time, that we begin a process of critical analysis of the West's historical processes, to seek out the actual nature of the roots of the exploitative and oppressive conditions which are forced upon humanity. At the same time, as we gain understanding of those processes, we must reinterpret that history to the people of the world.

It is the people of the West, ultimately, who are the most oppressed and exploited. They are burdened by the weight of centuries of racism, sexism, and ignorance which has rendered their people insensitive to the true nature of their lives.

We must all consciously and continuously challenge every model, every program, and every process that the West tries to force upon us. Paulo Friere wrote in his book, the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, that it is the nature of the oppressed to imitate the oppressor, and by such actions try to gain relief from the oppressive condition. We must learn to resist that response to oppression.

The people who are living on this planet need to break with the narrow concept of human liberation, and begin to see liberation as something which needs to be extended to the whole of the Natural World. What is needed is the liberation of all the things that support Life—the air, the waters, the trees.

We feel that the Native peoples of the Western hemisphere can continue to contribute to the survival potential of the human species. The majority of our peoples still live in accordance with the traditions which find their roots in the Earth. But the Native peoples have need of a forum in which our voice can be heard. And we need alliances with the other peoples of the world to assist in our struggle to regain and maintain our ancestral lands and to protect the Way of Life we follow.

The traditional Native peoples hold the key to the reversal of the processes in Western Civilization, which threaten unimaginable future suffering and destruction.





Batak: Murder and Forced Re-location on Palawan

Thomas Adona, a very respected elder of the Batak people in the remote Langogan valley on Palawan Island ('Philippines'), was brutally murdered on 23 April, 1999. He was killed by a Yantok Philipino, an intruder who wanted to harvest rattan, an important local commodity, without having consent from the local Batak people.

Adona was speared through one eye and through his head after having launched a renewed protest against the continous discrimination against the people of his tribe by the Philippinos, whom the Batak call Christianos. He was assasinated in Mangapin, a camp where Batak people have been forcibly concentrated since several years ago by national and local goverment orders, an area which is now dominated by the Christianos. The restrictive orders to forcibly concentrate the Batak people were enacted by the Government of the Philippines and are not opposed by conservation organizations like the Haribon Foudation, the World Wide Fund for Nature and Friends of the Earth. The numerous development organizations operating in Palawan did not comment on the killing.



Adona always tried to live his traditional life as an independant hunter-gatherer within his whole clan. He was a part of the rainforest, and like the rainforest, he was killed brutally. Despite the many threats Adona and his people have received and despite the efforts of the government and other organizations to subdue and restrict the Batak, he will be a symbol for the loss of their culture and ingnite their resistance!

Like Buyon-og, another tribal Batak elder who died last year under unclear circumstances, Adona tried to preserve the traditional Batak life, culture and the forests. Despite all the peaceful efforts of the Batak people, the ancestral forests have been heavily degraded within the last few years by ouside developers. Wild boars, formerly an important prey for the Batak, are extinct in many forests. These wild pigs have been massively poached by intruders with commercial interests, using firearms and grenades (pig bombs). In contrast, the Batak are not even allowed to gather plants in their own land. These products are essential in Batak barter trade, but official licences to collect them on the Batak ancestral lands are in the hands of powerful people in the cities, who employ Philippinos from the slums, like the murderer of Adona, to do the harvest.

All Batak are forced to be concentrated in camps, to go to church and to send their children to religious or state schools. There they are taught that the traditional life in the forest, as their parents and all their ancestors lived, has to be seen as bad, uncivilized and underdeveloped. Only a core group of traditional Batak still resists this terror.

Since last year, all the Batak have been under heavy terror from several aggressive missionaries. The adult male Batak and Tabauas (who live in association with the Batak) received a tattoo on their upper arms to show that they belong to a certain Christian sect. The tattoo bearers do not even know the meaning of these registrations on their skin.

Only nine Batak extended family-groups are left. They resist and continue to live independantly. Hartmut Heller of FPCN (see contacts) witnessed and testified to the indigenous people's caucus that these people are threatened almost daily by "officials" and intruding outsiders.

The Batak are on the edge of extinction. They are completely dominated by aggressive Christian missionaries. The NGOs who should be assisting them in their struggle are either doing nothing or assisting the genocide.



What You Can Do



Normally in this part of an article you get instructions on where to send money. Rarely is there anything else the Great Orgs want us rabble to do. Sometimes you can subscribe to a nice cheerful 'zine so you can see just how cool they are. But the money, or most of it, gets spent on offices and travel tickets, computers and consultants. In the real world, people need things to defend themselves with, like guns. Do you know anyone who does that? Well don't waste your money then. Spend it on beer, at least that way you aren't helping harmful experts to make even more problems. By taking strategic direct action here in the West we can force our organisations and corporations to listen to the people on their own terms, and show them that clever PR stunts like UN conferences and 'consultations' do not achieve the intended deception.

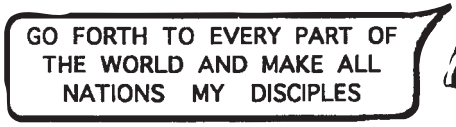
Here in the West is where the source of the problems lies. Although specific solidarity actions are very useful and can often make a big difference to the morale of the people being attacked by the spreading civilisation, sometimes it can be difficult to justify one particular target whose culpability is hidden behind a web of corporate hermeticism. And often when a target is obvious it is a long way from where you live. When this is the case, since the whole of industrial civilisation is interdependent, you can rest assured that any attack on any of its agents will ultimately help. The downfall of Monsanto will not only achieve one of the immediate aims of those campaigning against GM crops, it will also help to weaken the corporate monster as a whole. The recent attack on financial centres was also very good in this context.

So just keep on doing what you are doing: trash offices, block streets, destroy dozers, bring down the animal exploitation industry (and thus industrial agriculture), protest peacefully or riot, whatever turns you on, just cause trouble wherever possible and most of all spread doubt in the minds of the great public faithful. Help to shatter their illusion. That illusion, called progress, is the thing upon which everything else is based. Until that changes, nothing else will.

Having said all that, it's apparent from the Hadzabe article that FPCN are different. Run and funded entirely by unpaid volunteers, their structure (or lack of it) is similar to our own, and they are free of all the usual caution and dishonesty seen in those who depend on the enemies of wild people for their livelihoods. There is no formal structure, but here is part of their 'mission statement': "FPCN is a NDO (Non-Development Organisation), a movement of groups and individuals, concerned with the survival of Tribal peoples and their cultures, in particular hunter-gatherers. These were the first and are the last

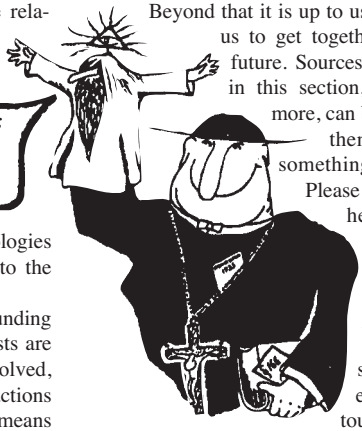


societies on earth to have a non-exploitative relationship with the world. Our task is to help them preserve their unique cultures from



enforced assimilation, alien religions, the ideologies of 'progress' and 'growth' and absorption into the global economy."

The cozy development organisations and funding bodies hate FPCN, so in a way radical activists are the only hope. You won't find it easy to get involved, you won't get loads of junk-mail, or set-piece actions 'to go', but then it's a good thing because that means you are not being dictated to about what to do! Many of us become used to the idea that anyone calling for help should be 'organised', never thinking that perhaps we share that responsibilty. FPCN isn't there to provide a service for us, it's there for us to get involved. The network exists and is run efficiently.



Beyond that it is up to us to use it to enable us to get together and discuss the future. Sources for all the articles in this section, along with loads more, can be got from (or via) them, if you send something to cover costs. Please get involved and help to make this lone radical voice big enough to counteract the burgeoning indigenous 'aid' business. Just send a letter or email, you'll be in touch with a person, not a bureaucracy. An sae will be useful.

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UN—United Against Whom?



Every year the United Nations makes itself feel good by allowing favoured groups of indigenous people to go to Geneva and have a conference. Representatives from people who should be treated as equals are relegated to a side-issue conference with no executive power whatsoever. This is the appalingly named United Nations Human Rights Commission Open-Ended Inter-Sessional Working Group on the Elaboration of the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Delegates are allowed to wear badges saying things like 'express what you feel', yet this year, when they clapped in a presentation, the white European chairwoman told them to stop.

Run by white Westerners, it is clear that the UN conference is playing a game with indigenous people. For example, in the 1997 conference, Brazil and France used pathetically transparent devices to disrupt any attempt by delegates to arrive at a consensus on what their rights were. Article 44 says: "Nothing in this Declaration may be construed as diminishing or extinguishing existing or future rights indigenous peoples may have or acquire." Brazil requested that the 's' at the end of the word 'peoples' in the term 'indigenous peoples' be bracketed. France then joined in by saying that the whole

word should be dropped and replaced with 'populations'. The Russian Federation and the United States of America then both asked to qualify the part of the article referring to the 'future rights' of 'indigenous peoples', thus effectively supporting the other efforts to block it.

If the UN is to be of any use at all, which is debatable, then indigenous peoples should have full seats in it. Anything else amounts to an affirmation of their inferior status. The following statement from the Federation of Native American Organisations of Guyana is a reply to attempts by nations to impose their laws and ways on other people.

"Though we live in our own land, that neither us nor our ancestors have ever left, we are facing to a legal system that is not ours. Still none of our Peoples remembers having ever renounced our own legal systems nor having allowed the European or colonial legislative power the care of to determine our rights.

"How can it be that we are suddenly subjected to laws established by a State created only a few centuries ago.

"These regimes' legal base inevitably depends on the principle that their laws are the only ones having competencies, that no other preceding legal structure ever existed or now exists, and that only a State can be source of authority. At their beginning these systems were based on the fact that the sovereign territory of the state was either unoccupied, or occupied by inhabitants that were so primitive that they were deprived of any type of social organization and therefore were unable to govern themselves. We would not be surprised then that a power established on such a specious base, if not denying our existence at least denying our competencies and our legal capability, is so little interested in recognizing our rights… We have been told that as Indigenous Peoples we have no right on our earth, we only have rights as individuals—in other words as state's pupils.

When we can escape from this condescending relation, we find ourselves in a situation just as much disheartening. Actually we are condemned to be classified within the minorities deprived from their collective rights and political, cultural, historical identity. We ironically find ourselves on our own land within the same classification as the most recent immigrants. Our original ownership is not recognized.



Banhat Forest, Thailand. Former home of the Manee, who were forced to move to the hills

"Our legal systems as well as our languages and our spiritual and cultural links that unite us to the land have disappeared for ever.

"Today, we are dispossessed peoples, with no other lands than the tiny little areas for our own usage, progressively the State has alienated us under its guardianship. Generally, as Indigenous Peoples, we are part of the most disadvantaged groups in the States we live in. And this is as true in developed countries as in under-developed or developing countries.

"This is why today we are facing the international community, and within the United Nations so we can elaborate with the world's governments international rights in favor of the Indigenous Peoples.

"In his speech at Palais de l'Elysée, Thursday 20 June 1996, the President of the French Republic considered that it was time to finally recognize Indigenous People's place, and to be fair with them because European civilization was for ever accountable for centuries of exploitation.'

"He also recognized that the Indigenous Peoples had been able to preserve a very significant part of their heritage."

Un-American Activities

Subverting The Great Satan



North America is a land of intense contrasts. Home to some of the most vile manifestations of the global industrial economy (from biotechnology and mining industries to the Pentagon) both Canada and the United States reek of an inflated 'standard of living' so far out of touch with natural limits that millions of naive citizens think the rest of the world is badly in need of assistance to keep up with us. Such a vacancy of consciousness in the populace seems surreal when contrasted with the sprawling magnificent wildlands and pockets of unmolested biodiversity. Huge, tourist-oriented National Parks help maintain the delusion that industrial society and wilderness are compatible, while the consumptive plague of modern society chomps away at the wild and uncolonized everywhere else...

Although together the US and Canada are comparable in size to mainland Europe, they almost completely lack its distinct regional identities. Homogeneity and monocultures are epidemic here, and quite effective in distracting the populace from developing a real political analysis of anything. Chances are if you haven't been here you haven't ever seen anything like it. In some ways the spectacular images portrayed in movies are accurate reflections of some of the social pathologies in the US and Canada that seem to worsen with time. An increasing concentration of media control coupled with an obsessive fixation on the 'miracles' of high technology and progress makes for an ugly situation. Fighting the propaganda war is almost as much to grapple with as mobilizing the masses—both of which tend to distract activists from taking 'real' direct action to confront the architects of the brave new world in a way that actually poses a threat.

Reform Or Revolution?

End Corporate Dominance, an active cross-movement alliance, falls short of radical opposition, setting as its main goal the revocation of 'bad' corporations' charters. But a growing eco-anarchist movement is looking to more fundamental causes and using organizing strategies that reflect an anarchist, rather than leftist, analysis of power, production and civilization itself.

Earth First!, the Earth Liberation Front and assorted green anarchists are doing their bit here to subvert the 'protest as usual' epidemic that has infected our cities and wilderness for decades. Popularized by the squatting communities of New York City in the 1980s, the integration of mutual aid projects with confrontational occupation-style tactics has been one of the most subversive and inspiring strategies among anarchists. A growing interest among anar-

chists in ecological resistance, owing partly to the anarcho-primitivist critiques brought forth by *Fifth Estate* and *Anarchy* magazines (see page XXX for their contact details) in the early 1990s, has helped along the evolution of the short-sighted philosophy of Deep Ecology, and brought punks and urban anarcho-syndicalists alike into involvement with ecological direct action campaigns.

As it was founded by such ideologues, hardcore Deep Ecologists and even a few misanthropes still linger in Earth First! circles here in the US. But more and more, activists on the ground, in the trees and on the frontlines are also active in lefty social movements and eco-anarchist networks, and are applying an anarchist and/or primitivist critique to everyday life. At the anti-logging Red Cloud Thunder tree village in Oregon in the Northwest, autonomous organizing has developed an overtly anarchistic community committed to protecting a rare old-growth forest from industrial incursion.

Coalition and alliance work is fairly integral here as reform-oriented 'single issue' activism is all too common in the US. Bourgeois environmentalism protecting itself against a conservative political climate and a worsening police state practically forces activists to compete with each others' campaigns for media and political attention. Bridging these gaps has been a hallmark of the late 1990s, but not without growing pains. The endless debates about compromises in coalitions with reformist groups are quite paralyzing. Anarchists have struggled with formal and informal heirarchies in the infamous Headwaters forest campaign and liberal politicking in the campaigns at Minnehaha Free State in Minnesota, and at Vail, Colorado, where the ELF inflicted $12 million worth of damage on a ski resort playground for the rich in endangered lynx habitat (see *Fanning The Flames!* article that follows this).

Making Connections

Political alliances among direct action groups have been inspiring but also controversial, especially around the primitivist/syndicalist and pacifist/militant debates. A newly formed EF! alliance with the United Steelworkers of America has provoked criticism from some anarchists who see danger in the radical eco movement's collaboration with such a puppet of government. Alternately, forest activists, at the Headwaters campaign especially, have come under scrutiny by some syndicalists for provoking anger and hostility amongst loggers. What has come to be known as 'The Cult of Non-Violence' has recently come under sharp criticism in the wake of the Vail PR debacle. The debate continues to rever-





berate around the question of the representation of the movement in the Earth First! Journal and alignment with Unabomber Ted Kaczinski and alternately, Julia 'love your enemy' Butterfly (who's been spreading the message from a redwood tree sit for almost two years). Kaczinski himself suggested the militant wing of EF! 'break off' to form a new faction, and an informal 'green anarchist' network is slowly surfacing. The first American edition of *Green Anarchist* newspaper was recently printed in the States, and a rash of eco-anarchist/primitivist zines are circulating.

Native resistance and eco direct action campaigns have merged and cross-pollinated in both the US and Canada, maintaining encampments and organizing together. The American Indian Movement (AIM) has actively campaigned alongside Earth First! in a number of places, including Minnehaha Free State in Minnesota, Northwest forest defense camps, as well as on Mount Graham in Arizona, where the Vatican has contracted a University to build a telescope to detect extraterrestrial life for potential religious conversion. A coalition of conservationists, eco direct actionists and Native groups in Montana has organized to stop the slaughter of the last wild bison herd in Yellowstone National Park. In Canada's Coast Salish territory (also known as British Columbia, BC), the ongoing treaty process, seeking to sign present day treaties to legitimize and continue the genocide of Native people and the theft of land, is catalysing a reaction. An inspiring, militant youth group in Vancouver called the Native Youth Movement has been busy educating, reaching out to reservation youth, and participating in cross-movement gatherings and demonstrations, from Mumia to the MAI. Native resistance to colonization has been a major focus of solidarity for white eco-activists. Support for Wolverine, the Shushwap farmer who was jailed Peltier-style in the largest military and police mobilization in Canadian history in 1995, has been continuous in radical activist networks, largely coordinated by Victoria's Settlers in Support of Native Sovereignty (SISIS). Militant Native groups, alongside black nationalists, leftists and anarchists, hold a march and rally in Plymouth, Massachusetts, every Thanksgiving during an annual 'Pilgrims Pride' march to challenge the glorification of the Pilgrim contributions to Indian communities.

A coalition led by AIM on the Pine Ridge Lakota Reservation in South Dakota recently held militant, spiritual marches just outside the reservation boundary to protest unsolved Indian murders and exploitative alcohol sales to Indians by white merchants. (Alcohol is banned on the reservation, thus the placement of the businesses just outside the boundary.) One liquor store was trashed during the first march, prompting a heightened police presence at the others, but Lakota activists managed to set up an encampment in the town called 'Camp Justice.' When President Clinton came to Pine Ridge in early July to encourage 'development' on the reservations, he was booed and heckled for ignoring the constant violations of an 1868 treaty and his failure to issue clemency for political prisoner Leonard Peltier.

East Coast

Pockets of EF!ers are active all around the continent. In the Southeast US, eco-activists opposing the infestation of high-tech wood chip mills in the region have blockaded and locked down to cranes, gates and machinery, and hung banners on massive export docks. Activists organize with local Native groups against nuclear power, white supremacists and police brutality, and have recently started a regional Resistance Against Genetic Engineering (RAGE) network. In the Northeast, EF! has taken direct action at pulp and paper mills where dioxin levels threaten water supplies and community health, as



well as networking with local native communities. A regional anti-biotech network has pulled off several high-profile actions against Monsanto and the US Department of Agriculture, and the Northeast branch of the Biotic Baking Brigade (BBB) pied an animal geneticist this past spring. Many eco-activists are actively campaigning against police brutality and in support of political prisoners, especially Mumia Abu-Jamal, and an excellent green anarchist zine called Treeflesh is out and about. Activist gardeners in New York City have mobilized against the city's aggressive 'urban renewal' agenda that has resulted in a near-constant threat to community gardens.

Midwest Malcontents

Though the region is internationally infamous as a cultural wasteland (well, should be), activist culture in the Midwest is suprisingly vibrant. Some Midwest eco-activists have focused on pro-democracy, End Corporate Dominance-style campaigns, as well as forest defense in Northern Minnesota and opposing an EXXON mine in Wisconsin. This past spring, Chicago EF! disrupted business at the largest merchant of old-growth wood products, Home Depot, by locking down to shelving in the store and pirating the store intercom for hours. The Animal Liberation Front struck in April at the University of Minnesota, releasing 116 animals vandalizing offices, taking files and video documenting the animal abuse. The Minnehaha Free State still stands in the way of a hotly contested highway re-route project designed to cut minutes off commuters' driving time to the suburbs and the huge Mall of America complex. The encampment protects one of the last urban green strips along the Mississippi River and a cold water spring considered sacred to the Mendota Indians. AIM and EF! teamed up to stop the re-route, along with liberal preservationists and university students. After a raid by over 600 police last winter the free state was evicted. Though the abandoned homes were demolished, people promptly returned and have squatted the site with tree-sits and a barrack-style dwelling ever since. Tensions between liberals and anarchists flared this spring when a Biotic Baking Brigadier tossed a pie at an anti-Indian state senator. Agent Pecan was recently sentenced to 60 days in jail.



The Twilight Zone (Montana and Idaho)

Unlike the Midwesterners, the Wild Rockies activists really are as loony as the home-grown rednecks—damn effective though. In the Northern Rockies, wild buffalo protection efforts and forest defense campaigns are challenging a fervent pro-cattle, private property and timber industry climate. Buffalo Nations has succeeded in greatly reducing the numbers of wild buffalo slaughtered to 'protect' the livestock industry in Montana. One activist hurled a bucket of buffalo guts on the governor, a senator and the US Secretary of Agriculture, and miraculously got off with only a slap on the wrist. The defense of the largest contiguous unprotected wilderness in the lower 48 states has been ongoing for eight years now and has temporarily halted logging while appeals to the Forest Service are heard. Opponents of logging on publicly owned forest land have been pushing a





Police use cotton buds to daub pepper spray on the eyes of locked-down activists.

'zero cut on public lands' agenda for a few years, hoping to save the few unroaded national forests and restore the heavily logged ones. While somewhat reformist, and only a fragment of the solution to deforestation, the zero cut campaign has opened many average Americans' eyes to the fact that national forests are essentially a government crop leased to the timber industry and replanted as tree farms.

The Left Coast

Twenty years on the West Coast is still the well spring of most of the energy in the US movement, or so we like to say. They have big wild in the Rockies, but we've got the big trees. In the Western US and Canada, activist defence of the temperate rainforest ecosystem has been constant. From the California redwoods to Alaska's Copper River delta, tree sitting, road blockading, and urban demonstrations have brought immense public attention to the crisis of deforestation, soil erosion, salmon decline, and the loss of biodiversity, not to mention stolen native land. The Chugach roadless area in Alaska saw its first ever EF!-style campaign in 1998. In the pristine rainforest of British Columbia, the Forest Action Network (FAN) and local Nuxalk people have blockaded and occupied traditional Nuxalk territory now claimed by International Forest Products. Several ships were blockaded in the Vancouver harbour last fall and spring by People's Action for Threatened Habitat (PATH) and FAN to stop raw log exports of old growth. As well as continuously organizing around BC's forest policies and in support of First Nations sovereignty struggles, urban activists in Vancouver and Victoria mobilized in 1997 against the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings and in 1998 against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, two more trade organizations with serious implications for activists of every stripe.

In Oregon and Washington, old-growth logging on public lands has provoked near-constant direct action campaigns over the past five years, as the last pockets of wilderness are attacked by desperate corporations and their government buddies in the Forest Service. In Oregon's Cascade Mountains, the defense of Fall Creek is in its 16th month. The Enchanted Forest Free State has grown to seven sits, ranging from 150 to 200 feet high in the canopy of the Clark timber sale of the Willamette National Forest. The 1999 logging season began on May Day, and crusty trolls have been hard at work wrecking the roads, digging tunnels and erecting blockades all spring. But, alas! The evil machinery of earth destruction came in late June and levelled the beautiful troll-y handiwork, filling tunnels and plucking howling goblins from monopods with their vile cranes. Currently, there is a road closure, presumably to preserve the precious gravel ribbon running through OUR forest from further creative outbursts. Spirits are high, and many faces, old and new, are floating through this summer. The Enchanted Forest attracts a new breed of activist…the daring, the devilish, the stout of heart. Crusty anarcho-imps and raging mamas are invited to join the fun! Basecamp is ongoing. Does treesitting work? Ask the baffled Forest Service.

The forest movement further south in the redwoods has built an interesting alliance with striking workers at Kaiser Aluminum Co., owned by Maxxam, the same company that is logging Headwaters forest. Last winter, the Industrial Workers of the World, EF! and steelworkers pulled off a dramatic Kaiser ship occupation in Tacoma, Washington, and then marched together in the Maxxam timber town of Scotia, near Headwaters forest. More recently, the two factions teamed up at the Maxxam shareholders' meeting in Texas, where the steelworkers attempted to vote labor activists onto the company's board of directors. Steelworker darling Julia Butterfly is approaching her second year in the giant redwood tree, Luna. Tree sits are also being maintained on Gypsy mountain, near the site where activist David 'Gypsy' Chain was killed by a logger.

Desert Rats—the Southwest

After sending most of the public lands cattle ranchers and logging companies to where the sun don't

shine, Southwest activists now focus on a variety of issues. Native-white alliances have been central to direct action campaigning, where environmental racism, nuclear colonialism, and the brutal enforcement of an illegitimate national border runs rampant. Although some reactionary forces in the environmental movement have rallied against immigration as an environmental threat, radicals and anarchists have acknowledged who the real immigrants are (that would be us) by supporting Mexican workers' strikes at Hyundai's Tijuana factory and Asarco's Cananea smelter, and organizing with indigenous and Chicano groups (and winning!) against proposed nuclear waste dumps in West Texas and Southern California. Eco-activists continue to support the Natives resisting the federal government's persistent efforts to forcibly relocate Dine traditionalists at Big Mountain, on Arizona's Navajo reservation, to make way for an expansion of Peabody Coal Company's mining operations. At the Nevada nuclear test site, the Western Shoshone elders and anti-nuclear activists continue their annual mass arrest actions, seeking a shut-down of the test site and restoration of traditional Shoshone lands.

In Southern Colorado, Ancient Forest Rescue and EF! have teamed up with local Chicano subsistence farmers against Zachary Taylor III, a wealthy landowner and descendent of a US president. Logging operations on La Sierra, a nearby mountain which Taylor claims to own, threaten the self-regulated flow of water to the agrarian community of San Luis, where traditional irrigation methods have maintained 'la gente' (the people) through generations. In June 1999, following the EF! Round River Rendezvous, activists descended on the streets of San Luis with a puppet performance, and the following day around 40 people marched en masse onto La Sierra to stop logging operations. Three people locked down to two hauling trucks on Taylor's property, while at the front gate 75 people erected a tripod. When infamous EF! wannabe infiltrator Barry Clausen showed up at the gate, he was quickly exposed and followed to town where he was pied while reporting back to his employers (the timber industry) on a payphone!

Pastry Uprising!

The Biotic Baking Brigade (BBB) has spread throughout the continent flinging pies right and left, literally. Robert Shapiro (CEO of Monsanto), an animal geneticist in New Hampshire, the director of the Sierra Club and biotech spin doctor Dennis Avery have all been pied in the last year. An anti-Indian senator in Minnesota, the attorney general of British





Environmental Rangers



"We're environmentalists, we're treehuggers and we're armed to the goddamn teeth."—Ric Valois, Environmental Ranger.

The Environmental Rangers (ER) were formed in the mid-1980s and are best described as an eco-militia. Staunch anti-racists and 'heartfelt environmentalists' they are mainly Vietnam War veterans who feel they owe their sanity to the healing influence of wild areas.

They started off by patrolling the mountains and forest of Montana and Idaho; "rescuing wounded wild animals, threatening people who shot coyotes and mountain lions, and keeping track of the latest industrial encroachments into wilderness areas." They later engaged in monkeywrenching, cutting fences, ripping up survey stakes and disabling bulldozers. In the mid-1990s they had involvement in the Cove Mallard anti-logging campaign. As Ric says; "this was my first real look at the whole non-violence passive resistance deal. These redneck loggers were just strollin' upto the blockades and beatin' the shit out of these hippies...A lot of those protesters never came back. So I decided to give the loggers an attitude ajustment." In Potlatch, Idaho, he walked into a meeting of 200 loggers, miners and ranchers announcing that they had "...better stop beating up on those hippies...[and]...pick on someone who's gonna fight back. I'm challenging every man in this room because I think you're all a bunch of no-good chickenshit cowards and bullies. So throw down, boys, or get the fuck out of my face." Apparently nobody took up the challenge.

Since then they have been active in anti-mining campaigns in Montana, taking on Pegasus Gold Inc., a company whose mines leak cyanide into the surrounding areas. Exhausting all legal and non-violent methods, Ric reckons that "non-violence is ultimately a cop-out, a lack of commitment." Armed, and seemingly willing to have confrontations with the state and corporations over the destruction of wilderness areas, maybe we'll be hearing more from the Environmental Rangers. As Ric is fond of saying: "I've got eight gallons of mad, and four quarts of whup-ass for these no-good, landrapin' cocksuckers! I'm ready to rip some heads off and shit down some necks!" Hmmm...

(Reliable [!] sources: *The Daily Telegraph*, Thursday April 18th 1996 and *Arena* magazine, November 1997.)

Columbia (for prosecuting First Nations resisters at Gustafson Lake in 1995), the mayor of San Fransisco (for anti-homeless policies), Barry Clausen (an Earth First! py), and Chevron CEO Kenneth Derr were also the subjects of delicious mischief.

Genetic Engineering—Digging for the Roots of Resistance

Resistance to genetic engineering (GE) has finally begun to take shape in the US and Canada. Networking and action-group forming has been constant for the past year, and the mainstream media is beginning to cover the issues. Those of us who see the need for a radical action movement in the United States find ourselves in the middle of a hibernating and mild political scene. US activists have slowly been gathering momentum with actions in grocery stores, press conferences, the streets, and a couple of field actions, but even average anarchists and radicals are uninformed on the issue.

At the Biodevastation III conference in Seattle, Washington, in May it was clear that we've got a ways to go before bringing the real problems to common consciousness. People came with a wide variety

of tactics—labelling is a popular one, as is generating lots of basic educational material about the 'potential effects of genetically modified foods.' Many US activists are convinced that as soon as 'the public' finds out what is going on they will demand labelling, thus pressuring food producers to stop using genetically modified organisms. Wrong. Those of us concerned about the impact of biotechnology beyond the moral indignation of middle class yuppie consumers who have access to organic food are busy educating people about the crisis in agriculture in the Third World, and the myths of scarcity that provoke the ever-popular question, "How will we feed the world?" Many radical activists have criticized this type of mentality, and the global food system itself for creating dependencies through development schemes—the extension of colonialism. A growing number of people are beginning to look at the roots of biotechnology beyond single-issue politics, but it is only the first step. The revolution we envision is not going to come one morning with a big bang and snap of the shades, a crumbling of all the skyscrapers and rusting out of all the petrol-powered engines. It is a developmental process, and we must be capable of generating projects that will move us there from where we are now.

During hearings about the USDA's organic standards, 250,000 people in the US wrote letters, spoke at public hearings, and constructed direct action campaigns, and all they said was—we want quality organic standards. That this phrase is obscenely open to interpretation is beside the point; what sense does it make to request rules from a centralized hierarchy, when the very values at the root of this hierarchy caused the problems of irradiation, chemical agriculture, and genetic engineering? After workshops on the history of agriculture, colonialism, and global trade, the solution most people offer is to support organic standards and buy organic food. As of yet, a philosophical critique and vocabulary to discuss other modes of resistance aren't a significant part of the discourse. But some of us are aiming to bring it there.

The rest of the world has been organizing against genetic engineering far longer than the US, but looking to others' tactics is not the solution. Inspiring news from the UK and India about crop uprootings and burnings are difficult to replicate here for several reasons. The US already grows genetically modified organisms commercially, 20 million acres in fact, and the test plots of new crops are not registered with specific location information. And because the fields marked as genetically modified are commercial, destroying crops polarizes activists against farmers who, after experiencing a dramatic crunch economically through the 1980s and '90s, depend on those crops for their precarious livelihoods. Just north of the Vermont border in southern Quebec, cornfields hug the roadside for a solid half hour, flagrantly displaying signs for NK (Novartis), Roundup Ready, Yield Guard, and Pioneer, a challenge that by sheer volume, radical activists cannot imagine meeting.

There are so many industry and government targets we could campaign against and many angles from which different movements can approach the issues. But because many activists have diverted their energy into counterproductive, reformist endeavors, and because the discourse has not evolved past consumer-choice strategies, we thus far lack the critical mass necessary for real resistance. Once a few direct actions happen though, activists will start paying attention, absorbing the implications of this new mode of technology and all the economic and ecological threats behind it, and hopefully the infrastructure we are currently building through the North American Bioengineering Action Network and its associated regional action networks will support a coordinated effort.

Resistance To Globalisation

Following the lead of European and Canadian activists, globalisation is becoming a hot topic in the US. Canada mobilized a strong opposition to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) last year, especially in Montreal during the month of May, at the end of which 100 activists were arrested blockading a posh hotel where global financiers and right-wing politicians attempted to wine and dine.

Zapatista support is spirited but erratic in both countries, with a good deal of technical support coming from various collectives. Non-profit organizations like the Rainforest Action Network and Project







Underground have pulled off high-profile media stunts against Shell, Occidental Petroleum, Unocal, and Chevron, among others, for ecological and social devastation in the Third World. Labor rights campaigns against sweatshop abuses by Nike, The Gap, Van Heusen and other multinationals have provoked a major PR readjustment from most companies.

Several North Amerikan cities participated in the June 18th day of action in financial centers. Large protest parades took place in San Fransisco, Toronto, Boston, New York and Los Angeles, and a riotous anti-capitalist 'rampage' held the streets for hours in the sleepy college town turned eco-activist hotbed of Eugene, Oregon. This coming November should heat up in Toronto and Seattle, where global trade conferences are scheduled by the Free Trade of the Americas and World Trade Organization (WTO) ministers respectively. Another Global Day of Action against globalization has been called for November 30th, to coincide with the WTO ministerial. Activists are planning a festival of resistance, roadshows and an action training camp to prepare to confront the WTO.

If you're planning a visit to our continent, get in touch so you can find out where the action is! Late November would be an excellent time to visit, as the WTO meeting in Seattle promises to be fertile ground to launch some mischevious deeds and revel in a vibrant political culture. To find out more about eco-resistance in North America a good place to start is The Black And Green Network at: POB 11703, Eugene, OR 97440, USA. E-mail: raven@tao.ca As well as this never forget the *Earth First! Journal*—reporting on the spectrum of global direct action. See page XXX for their contact details.

To contact Buffalo Nations in Montana, see www.wildrockies.org/buffalo. To find out more about tree sits in Oregon, check out www.efn.org/~redcloud and www.ecoecho.org, email redcloud@efn.org or write PO Box 11122, Eugene, OR 97440, USA. San Fransisco's Whispered Media has produced a thrilling and informative half hour video on the BBB—a must see. Order from their website (www.videoactivism.org) or for $15 from: PO Box 40130, San Francisco, CA 94140, USA; Email: whisper@energy-net.org





Fanning The Flames!



During the night of October 18th 1998, cloaked in the dark of an almost new moon, two or more people crept along a Colorado ridgeline leaving plastic milk jugs filled with gasoline as fiery calling cards at five buildings and four chairlifts.The 33,000 square-foot, 550 seat Two Elks Lodge was totalled, resulting in minimum damages of $12 million to Vail Associates (VA). In addition, a 2,500-square-foot picnic shelter,a ski patrol building and one of the chairlifts were ruined, pushing the total amount of damages much higher than the widely reported $12 million and making this the single most expensive act of ecological sabotage in US history.

Only five days earlier, a court had ruled that Vail Resorts could proceed with its Category III expansion into the Two Elks Roadless Area, despite the objections of local environmentalists. The Colorado-based group Ancient Forest Rescue (AFR) has led that opposition, noting that the development of 2,200 acres of additional skiable terrain on public land is but a prelude to VA's real plans for building luxury condominiums, a new base area and village to village gondolas on as much as 3,000 additional acres.

The new ski area alone, without the condos, would include four new chair lifts, 12 miles of road and ski ways and a 350 seat restaurant spanning Two Elk Creek. Ben Doon of AFR noted in the May/June issue of the Earth First! Journal that,"Twelve-hundred logging trucks would be needed to haul away six million board feet of virgin spruce and fir. In return for the destruction of this pristine roadless area, the public would get back a pitiful 1.5 cents on every dollar made by Vail Inc. on this expansion, or less than $1 for every $56 lift ticket." Vail's net revenues last year were $291 million, garnered from Vail Mountain and five other ski resorts, consisting of six hotels, 72 restaurants, 40 retail and rental outlets and over 1,300 condominiums. Altogether, Vail Resorts already controls almost half of the Colorado ski market.

The focus of the environmental opposition, however, was not the unwieldy size of the corporation but the unforgivable destruction of the last of the potential lynx habitat in Colorado. Since 1935, only four lynx sightings have been documented in the state, and three of those sightings were in the immediate vicinity of the proposed expansion. Even the Colorado Division of Wildlife has stated, "If there is any critical lynx habitat in the state, this is it!" VA



moved into the area immediately after the court hearing because a listing of the lynx on the Endangered Species Act is pending, and its listing will necessitate the largest endangered species recovery effort ever, encompasing 53 national forests and 24 Bureau of Land Management districts.

A widely held suspicion that the fires were set in protest of the Vail expansion was confirmed two days after the fire, when the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) issued a communique claiming responsibility. Suddenly, the ELF, an entirely underground group with no spokespeople or office, was centre stage in the theatre of national media.

For information the media turned to what they perceived as the next best thing, the Earth First! Journal and the Animal Liberation Front press office in Minnesota (what the heck, EF!, ALF, ELF, the names are similar!).

The story quickly turned from the Vail arson and its motives, to eco-terrorism and its perpetrators. The spark of interest was whipped into a full-blown conflagration by longtime anti-environmentalists Ron Arnold and Barry Clausen. They immediately put themselves forward as experts on 'eco-terrorism', and contacted every major media outlet to put their spin on the story. Lazy reporters failed to disclose Arnold and Clausen's ties to the timber industry. Arnold has even gone as far as to say, "We are out to kill the fuckers. We're simply trying to eliminate them. Our goal is to destroy environmetalism once and for all." In service of that agenda, Clausen and Arnold have dedicated their lives to portraying frontline activists as violent terrorists.

The Rocky Mountain News ran with the story, quoting Clausen saying, "The Earth First! Journal put out the call for action. They read the literature and then they go out and commit acts of sabotage." Clausen continues to say, "the ecoterrorism movement has spawned 'serial arsonists, no telling how many, who are going around the West.'" Ron Arnold said in the national newspaper USA Today that "the fires have 'upped the ante' to the tactics used by terrorists in Europe and the Middle East."

While Clausen and Arnold were creating chaos nationally, internal philosophical tensions were fanned into full-fury by the arson. Because the local activists in AFR align themselves with Earth First! but denounce sabotage, the wider movement was effectively split between camps supporting AFR's non-violent civil disobedience and the ELF's sabotage. (AFR had been in the woods establishing a blockade to stop the logging trucks the night of the arson and was forced to retreat by the overwhelming law enforcement heat brought down by the fire.) In many ways, the scenario created a perfect forum in which to march out the never-ending theories about the relative merits of civil disobedience and sabotage.

And march we did, forming ourselves into columns, flying the flags of our ideological predecessors (Judi Bari here, Ned Ludd over there) and attacking each other with the bloodlust and enmity perhaps better reserved for...well...our enemies.

With the notable exception of a few descents to name calling, back stabbing and politicking, the debate flushed out the incredible breadth of diversity camped out under the Earth First! banner in the States. Underlying much of the tension was the assumption that Earth First!ers need to agree about the role of sabotage, an assumption lent credence by the existence of a 'voice' for the movement, the Earth First! Journal (which bravely but very foolishly tried to voice the spectrum of perspectives and was soundly spanked by the dogmatic.)

It's tempting to say that although no consensus was reached about the effectiveness of the Vail action, a healthy mutual understanding was. But there is an ultimate judge of the goings on, and even now the last of her kind steals through the wooded valleys of the last of the big wild on magnificent, incongruously large white paws, hunting hares in the snow and listening to the rumbling encroachment of the dozer...

To read the intricacies of the debate, contact: *Earth First! Journal*, POB 1415, Eugene, OR 97405, USA. Tel: (541) 344-8004
E-mail: earth first@igc.org Website: http://www.envirolink.org/orgs/ef. (Most of this article was swiped from there.)



Paranoid Androids?
One Nation Under a Barcode

Great Britain, 1999: state snooping, intelligence gathering, and covert spy work is no longer just the job of shady police and security bodies like MI5, Special Branch, the Met and co. These days Orwellian state surveillance and Big Brother technology is an essential cog in the cold consumer machine. Behind the computer screens, telephones and spy camera lenses, the UK surveillance technology industry is worth £2 billion a year. Department of Social Security (DSS) fraud investigators, rail ticket collectors [aka Revenue Protection Officers!], TV license squads, and private security firms like Group 4 are employed to work as the 'Little Brothers' for the Big Brother law enforcement agencies. Surveillance is a part of the daily routine.

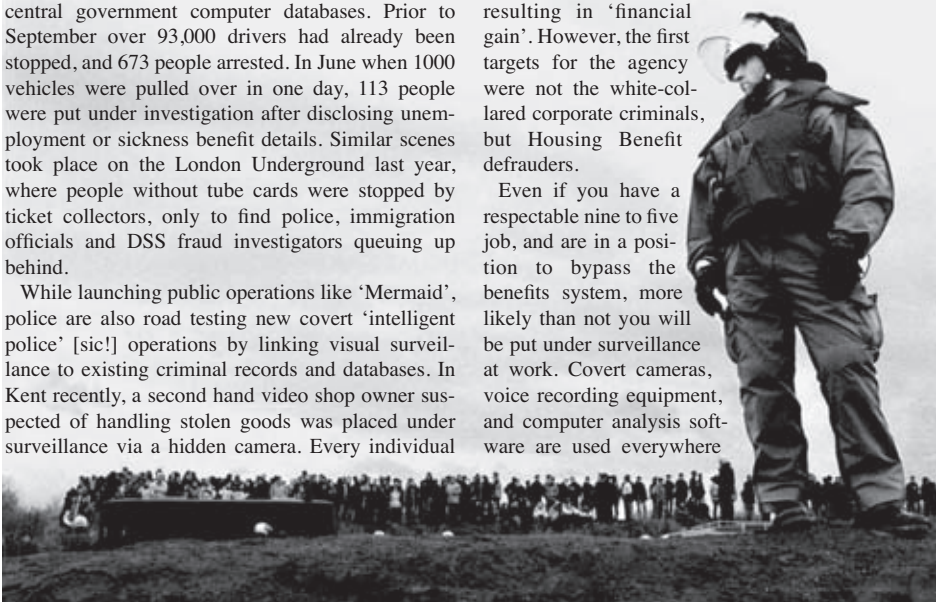
Employees are monitored for performance on the basis of conversations recorded or footage filmed during the day. Superstore loyalty cards are screened to identify individuals by their consumer habits, credit rating, and marketing potential. And inside the home-every phone call made, internet site visited, or even programme watched on pay-by-view digital television leaves a potential information trail to the door of the law enforcement agencies.

Stop and search powers are being used by police across the UK to target "illegal immigrants, benefits cheats and anyone 'of interest' to the police"[1], under the Public Relations cover of a national clampdown on dangerous cars. In September 1998, as part of an ongoing campaign known as 'Operation Mermaid', police roadblocks were set up with immigration, DSS and Customs and Excise officials ready to interrogate passing drivers. Mobile data terminals were used to check license plates, National Insurance (NI) numbers, and to search extra information held on central government computer databases. Prior to September over 93,000 drivers had already been stopped, and 673 people arrested. In June when 1000 vehicles were pulled over in one day, 113 people were put under investigation after disclosing unemployment or sickness benefit details. Similar scenes took place on the London Underground last year, where people without tube cards were stopped by ticket collectors, only to find police, immigration officials and DSS fraud investigators queuing up behind.

While launching public operations like 'Mermaid', police are also road testing new covert 'intelligent police' [sic!] operations by linking visual surveillance to existing criminal records and databases. In Kent recently, a second hand video shop owner suspected of handling stolen goods was placed under surveillance via a hidden camera. Every individual entering and leaving the shop was scanned against police databases to build up a chart of colleagues and friends. The police then passed on this information to the DSS, Trading Standards and Health and Safety, and the owner and colleagues ended up in court. The shop ended up closed; yet the owner had no idea of the covert surveillance that had taken place.

This operation, known as computer data matching, is turning individual government and police systems into a single giant electronic driftnet, in which any one department can interrogate data from any other. For example, under the Social Security Administration (Fraud) Act, the DSS were given the power to check data from systems run by the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise[2]. DSS fraud investigators can also check information held on the Home Office immigration, emigration, passport and prisons databases. And as if all these investigative powers were not enough, the Security Service Act of 1996 gave MI5 a new role in investigating crimes resulting in 'financial gain'. However, the first targets for the agency were not the white-collared corporate criminals, but Housing Benefit defrauders.

Even if you have a respectable nine to five job, and are in a position to bypass the benefits system, more likely than not you will be put under surveillance at work. Covert cameras, voice recording equipment, and computer analysis software are used everywhere



to track and monitor individuals in the workplace. Cashiers working in supermarkets are logged on to a mainframe computer and checked for the rate of baked bean cans they scan in a day. Phone operators employed in telephone call centres are eavesdropped on and their Call Handling Time performance monitored[3]. In most large chain stores CCTV is specifically used to watch the workers, as well as scanning for shoplifters. Theme pubs and petrol stations position CCTV cameras over the tills to monitor all cash transactions, and over computer terminals to watch over the operators.



Today, employers can investigate a person's lifestyle and history before hiring them. Under the 1997 Police Act staff managers can look at criminal conviction certificates held on police databases[4]. Random drug tests are appearing in the workplace, written in the fine print of the contract, or even made a compulsory part of the interview process. Recruitment agencies automatically screen employees through extensive references, computerised personality and psychology tests, and in some cases, handwriting analysis. A recent report into workplace privacy by the Institute of Employment Rights said that British employees were the most monitored in Europe[5]. In the same way that banks are using data profiles of customers to track credit rating and spending patterns, the UK workforce is being put under the surveillance microscope and filed for future reference.

Online, freedom in cyberspace is being challenged byte for byte by the new technology and backdoor legislation mobilised by law enforcement agencies to police the internet. All EU national police forces will soon have the power to monitor an individual's real time internet use and e-mail traffic. In December 1998 Statewatch revealed that the EU Council of Justice are pushing through legislation forcing all Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to hand over the account numbers and personal billing information of any individual subscriber on production of a warrant[6]. Like phone tapping, the authorities will be able to examine web surfing patterns and personal e-mails as they are sent over the net. Looking like a Euro-Police Act for the information age, the grounds for getting a warrant will "be infinitely extended to all forms of offence including public order or 'national security'"[7].

Travelling over physical national borders in Fortress Europe is getting tighter too, whether going to a festival, a demo or a football fixture. Since the Heysel Stadium disaster in May 1985, football fans have been picked out for special state surveillance. They are logged on databases, recorded on CCTV, with exclusion orders, undercover football 'spotters', and hooligan 'hotlines' all being used to keep fans down and the multinational sponsors and broadcasters smiling[8]. The Metropolitan Police Forward Intelligence Team (FIT) was at least initially aimed at both football fans (e.g: at Euro 96) and political activists (primarily Reclaim the Streets). The fact that the two are linked in this way says something quite revealing about policing priorities and attitudes[9]. Every year the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) receives around 5,500 intelligence reports on football fans from the 92 English pro league clubs[10]. Inside the Football Unit of the NCIS this intelligence is catalogued, analysed and filed on to the database and made available to all UK police forces. Every time fans go abroad, these files are made available to their European police counterparts, and in the case of two Cardiff City fans, some are stopped, arrested, interrogated and then deported back to the UK[11].

On the 26th May 1997, the EU Council of Justice passed legislation allowing national police and security agencies to link up databases, conduct joint surveillance operations, and share information on anyone travelling in large groups to "political demonstrations, pop concerts, environmental protests and sports fixtures"[12]. Since then Trans-European police operations have begun to concentrate on the intelligence angle. For example, Danish bikers travelling to the 1998 Custom Bike Festival were identified by Kent police from digital mug shots held on the Schengen Information System (SIS). And official figures show the SIS currently holds over 3.5 million



records on file, including information on asylum seekers, immigrants, drug users and campaigners[13]. In September last year, 50 people attending a People's Global Action seminar in Geneva were arrested in a dawn raid. Illegally detained, they were photographed, fingerprinted, and photocopies made of their passports. No information was available to say whether this material would be destroyed, stored on Swiss databases, or made available to European police on the Schengen system.

Don't Get Too Paranoid…

In the UK, government and corporations are linking technological arms, building surveillance mechanisms into every corner of society. It is impossible to estimate the scale of all this technology and of state intrusions into our lives. Personal anonymity is being erased with every new computer system and closed-circuit camera.

But it is worth remembering the restraints this technology operates under. They are restrained by the cost of the technology and they are restrained even more by the cost of labour. It costs £100 million a year in wages just to monitor CCTV systems in the UK. Ultimately the technology has to be maintained by humans, and is vulnerable to human error. Networks will fail, systems will crash and data will be 'unretrievable'. Surveillance operations cost time, money, and manpower, and Big Brother stings like 'Operation Mermaid' are designed primarily to intimidate the population into compliance.

Therefore we shouldn't be frightened by these 'crackdowns', precisely because that is their primary purpose. They rely on fear and paranoia to achieve a deterrent effect—they will swoop in, make examples of a few people and then be gone again. DSS roadblocks, benefit fraud crackdowns, yellow hat inspectors on the trains, drugs squads complete with sniffer dogs that make periodic raids on train stations—all of these are too expensive to be used all the time—they are confined to particular areas and to a short space of time. With a little bit of intelligence it is still possible to play on their weaknesses and stay one step ahead of the state surveillance machine…

Fight Back!

- Consider every piece of data as a weapon that may potentially be used against you—from an address on a competition form to the information contained on the electoral register (voting information has been passed on to the Inland Revenue and the DSS in the past). When putting your real name to anything use only one initial as two will give a more accurate match on computer files.
- Multiple identities are not difficult to manufacture. Reverse initials on forms and bills, change two digits of your NI number, and give as little information as necessary.
- Think about the phone calls you are making. BT will sometimes pass on billing information direct to police, who use analysis software to create personal profiles of contact networks, friends etc. When planning actions don't run through the entire phone tree in one go—or you could inadvertently end up disclosing more information than necessary.
- Employers have to inform you if they intend to record your calls, film you at work or monitor your e-mails. A number of cases have upheld this point in the European Court of Human Rights under Article 8 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights. With e-mail, unless you are using strong encryption, assume that every mail you send is an open letter that can be read by anyone. Use encryption software like Pretty Good Privacy which is available as freeware on the internet at: http://www.pgpinternational.com Alternatively, use free e-mail services to set up a temporary line of communication when organising actions, registering in a false name (see box on the J18 website in *June 18th* article on page 31).
- Apply to local councils, businesses and police to see camera footage taken of you. Under the European Data Protection Directive you have a right to see what data and images are held on you. Applications for information are made through the UK Data Protection Registrar.
- Likewise, apply to see what information is held on government files. You can apply to civil agencies like the DSS, or police authorities like the NCIS to see what information is held on file. For more information contact the UK Data Protection Registrar.
- Silence, non-disclosure and duplicity is the best route to retaining anonymity and creating multiple identities. One individual in the US who ended up in court for holding false documents got a medical note to say that he had temporary amnesia and couldn't remember filling out the original forms. He was found not guilty. Use your imagination and let that split personality run wild!

(For more suggestions on becoming 'invisible' see 'Now You See Me…' section in *From Knapping To Crapping* on page 302.)



Contacts

Privacy International, PO Box 3157, Brighton, BN2 2SS, East Sussex, UK.
Website: http://www.privacy.org
Statewatch, PO Box 1516, London, N16 OEW, UK.
Website: http://www.statewatch.org
UK Data Protection Registrar, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, UK.
Website: http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980029.htm
Privacy Internationals 'Big Brother Survival Kit' is recommended. Contact *Privacy International* or for information e-mail: bbsurvivalkit@yahoo.com

Footnotes

1 Privacy International website: www.privacy,org
2 Computer Weekly, 05/12/96.
3 Communication Workers Union, 150 The Broadway, London, SW19 1RX.
4 Section 5, 100-110, Police Act 1997.
5 *Workplace Privacy*, IER, 177 Abbeville Road, London, SW4 9RL.
6 Statewatch, Vol. 8 No. 6.
7 Ibid.
8 *Surveillance, CCTV and Social Control*, Ashgate, 1998.
9 See 'The Empire Strikes Back', *Do or Die* No. 6, page 137.
10 NCIS Annual Report 1997, PO Box 8000, London, SE11 5EN, UK.
11 Case of the Boore Brothers. Contact Liberty, London, 1993.
12 Statewatch Report, 24/09/98.
13 *Under Surveillance* 1998 Justice, London, UK.


LISTEN, NATURE BOY, AS SOON AS TODAY'S ELECTION IS OVER, I'M GONNA GET A NEW LAW PASSED - A LAW AGAINST YOU!
SO GO PEDDLE YOUR CRACKPOT IDEAS SOMEWHERE ELSE - OR I'LL PERSONALLY CHOP YOU UP AND DUMP YOU ON THE COMPOST HEAP

Beware the fashion police…

Waiter waiter, there's a cop in my suit!

As reported in the *Earth First! Action Update* (No. 55, Jan/Feb '99, see p. 333 for contact details) a new law regarding covering your face to prevent identification—masking up—came into force on March 1st 1999. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Section 25-27, states that it "aim[s] at preventing violence by giving the police new powers to unmask potential violent offenders." This law can only be used if a police officer of Inspector rank or above fears "serious violence or disorder in his/her area" and gives an order for you to 'de-mask'. If you do not "remove any item which the constable reasonably believes you are wearing wholly or partly for the purpose of concealing your identity" then you can be arrested. They also have the power to confiscate and destroy the materials used to mask up with.The police have been swift in implementing this new law. According to *SchNEWS* 209, 23rd April 1999, see page 333 for contact details) hunt saboteurs in Dorset were de-masked and their hooded tops confiscated after the police declared the whole county "an area of potential serious disorder". In Oxfordshire, Thames Valley Police used the new law at the anti-vivisection demonstrations at Hillgrove Farm, where they forced people to de-mask, arresting one person who refused to do so. It was also used in The City of London on June 18th (see page 1) where some people leaving Liverpool Street station had their masks pulled off by the police.

Rather than being intimidated into not masking up we must find ways around this law. One way to do this is to encourage more people to wear masks on actions. The police may be able to demand the removal of 5 or 6 people's masks but 500 or 600 should be more of a problem. It should also provoke a more strategic, wider look at our tactics. Learning, and using, methods of dealing with surveillance teams, snatch squads and police intimidation of individuals must become second nature for us. Additionally the police can only de-mask us if they are there; so maybe we should be thinking about less 'set-piece' demonstrations and confrontations with the police, and more about surprise hits and mobile actions on our own terms. Above all though, we mustn't be put off—whatever laws they throw at us, we'll be there, continuing to resist…

Millennial Paranoia

They're Coming to Take Us Away, HaHaHeeHee…

From panic stories in the press, to drunken conversations in the pub and conspiracy theories in New Age mags—everyone's got something to say about the Millennium bug. Here's our penny's worth: if somebody tells you they know authoritatively what will happen as a result of the Millennium bug…don't believe them! Whether it's top programmers or speed freaks, the truth is that nobody knows. I'm placing my bets on hangovers and a bit of an anti-climax, the state however is not. Operating on either exclusive information or the precautionary principle the state is preparing for possible major chaos. This is not a deranged conspiracy theory—it comes directly from



their mouths. A computer whizz commissioned to write a report for the Metropolitan Police said that he fears "panic and civil disorder as electricity, gas and water supplies fail. Hunger as food supplies dwindle. Gridlock in major cities as traffic lights go out." (*The Guardian,* 26/5/99).

This Armageddon scenario is unlikely—but possible. More likely is major disruption for some local authorities. Interruption of benefit payments for a few weeks is possible in at least some areas, which could result in serious rioting. Whether any of this is going to happen nobody really knows, but as long ago as January the Association of Chief Police Officers revealed that "30 police forces [have] cancelled leave in anticipation of the collapse of public utilities" (*The Guardian*, 18/1/99). The National Crime Squad (the national police coordination organisation) has also cancelled all leave.

We will get our first inkling of what they intend with the policing of the eclipse (on August 11th '99) which they have admitted will in part be used as a Millennium training event. This is not surprising considering that the head of the police 'Millennium Co-ordination Committee' is John Evans—the Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall. More worrying than the police preparations for the bug is the involvement of the military. In the same January article quoted above, Chief Constable Evans confirmed that "talks with [the] military are already underway in case of civil disruption as a result of the bug…Army helicopters are being made available to airlift the police to different parts of the country in the event of disturbances". On July 18th The Times carried a front page article entitled 'Soldiers pull out of Kosovo to deal with millennium bug chaos'. Though it's worth taking the article with a pinch of salt it does make interesting reading—coming as it does from a newspaper close to the security services and read and written by the establishment.

"The SAS and other special services are to deal with outbreaks of civil disorder and the collapse of utilities under secret plans being drawn up by the armed forces to cope with the millennium bug…The extent of the military's role has been disclosed as the armed services prepare for the critical day of September 9, or 9/9/99, when the scale of the computer chaos could become apparent. Half the combat troops are to be withdrawn from Kosovo by the end of August, a total of up to 2,000 soldiers. [Operation Surety]…is designed to ensure that essential government and civilian [interesting distinction!] functions can continue between September and February…Planners fear that computer failures could leave installations vulnerable to criminal or terrorist attack. Armed troops, some with light tanks and heavy weapons, will be deployed to guard likely targets such as airports. In the worst scenario, some form of martial law might be necessary in localized areas. Eight leading financial institutions have asked the MoD for protection. Individual chief constables will call for military back-up if security system failures lead to looting and civil disorder… The Royal Navy will concentrate on the English Channel…The Royal Marines' counter-terrorist unit and the Special Boat Squadron will be on stand-by to board ships…A decision on whether leave for the armed services should be cancelled over the millennium will be taken after September, when the extent of the problem could emerge. The military has been testing its new communications systems over the past two weeks. Problems have been discovered and senior officers say they may have to rely on older radio technology."



Cynical as I am, when *The Times* talks about martial law, I start to worry. If you think 'troops on the street is not the kind of thing that happens in this country', look at Northern Ireland which has been under martial law for nearly thirty years [or think of the tanks outside major airports during the Gulf War]. My advice is not to get paranoid, but watch the unfolding situation. Read the papers aimed at the upper middle classes—see what they're being told. If you've got friends or relatives in the forces ask them what—if anything—they've been told. Don't scaremonger, and remain sceptical of anyone who tells you they know what's going to happen. As I said earlier, *I'm* expecting a vast anti-climax. However it's worth being well informed. As countless kids around campfires are taught to say—'Be Prepared'.



Lessons from the North of Ireland—Anti-Terrorist Legislation

"…if we lose in Belfast we may have to fight in Brixton or Birmingham… Perhaps what is happening in Northern Ireland is a rehersal for urban guerilla war…" - John Briggs MP, 1973.[1]

On 21st November 1974 bombs exploded in two Birmingham pubs, killing 21 people and injuring over 160. Within 8 days the *Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act* was introduced. It took just 17 hours to pass and nobody voted against it. The Act included provisions for banning organisations, arbitrary arrest, powers to exclude people from Britain and detain suspects for seven days without charge, court hearing or appeal. People became guilty until proven innocent, and were often not even told what the charges against them were.[2]

Twenty-seven years of struggle in Northern Ireland have shown how the British State responds to political conflict and civil war. The role of law in Northern Ireland is characterised by the criminalisation of political dissidents, the militarisation of the police and the politicisation of the courts. Brigadier Frank Kitson, an influential figure in British law enforcement, wrote "The law should be used as just another weapon in the government's arsenal, and in this case it becomes little more than a propaganda cover for the disposal of unwanted members of the public".[3]

Policing in Northern Ireland is a "laboratory situation" for the problems facing British policing. The array of military-type hardware and the increasingly violent and militaristic trends in mainland Britain all had their test run in the policing of Ireland.[4] Now the government is attempting to impose permanent and sweeping anti-terrorist legislation that will take in everyone from the IRA through to Earth First!

In December 1998 the government published a consultation paper on *Legislation Against Terrorism*.[5] In the light of moves towards peace in Northern Ireland they propose to get rid of the temporary *Prevention of Terrorism* (PTA) and *Emergency Provisions* (EPA) Acts, replacing them with a permanent law, retaining many of the PTA's terrifying powers of arrest and detention[6] and extending them to domestic 'terrorism'—us!

The document states that "Animal rights, and to a lesser extent environmental rights activists, have mounted and continue to pursue, persistent and destructive campaigns…While the level of terrorist activity by such groups is lower, and the sophistication of their organisation and methods less well developed than that of some of the terrorist groups in Northern Ireland…there is nothing to indicate that the threat they pose will go away."[7]

Terrorism is to be defined as "the use of serious violence against persons or property, or the threat to use such violence, to intimidate or coerce a government, the public or any section of the public for political, religious or ideological ends." The term serious violence is used to include serious disruption, for example attacks on computer installations or public utilities.[8] Alarmingly, powers under Section 60 of the CJA, frequently used on demonstrations to allow random stop and searches, are triggered by "serious violence", *exactly* the same words as proposed for the new Act.[9]

Under the proposed legislation the government's powers to ban any organisation (or 'front' organisation) deemed terrorist would be extended to include domestic terrorists.[10] It is also proposed to make it an offence to collect, record or possess information which might be useful to terrorists[11]—this could mean the end of the Corporate Watch Address Book, Squaring Up to the Square Mile, or even lists of Genetic test sites!

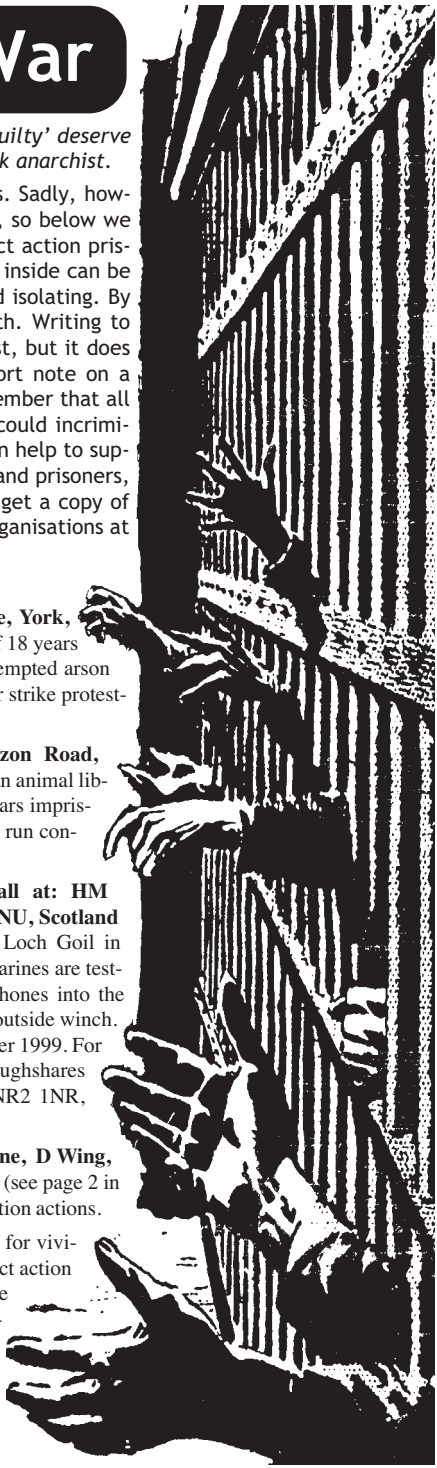
Much of what results from these proposals depends on public opinion and media image. It is already easy for the government to begin to classify animal rights campaigners as terrorists, and recent coverage of ecological direct action—particularly the June 18th Carnival[12]—suggest that if they tried to classify us as terrorists the media would be unlikely to dissent. Consultation on the paper finished in March 1999, and the Home Office are considering the results. They would not comment on when it might become law…

1. *Political Trials in Britain* by Peter Hain (Pelican, 1985) p.235.
2. *Ibid*. p.228/230
3. *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency and Counter Insurgency* by Brigadier Frank Kitson (Faber, 1971) p.69
4. *Op. Cit*. Peter Hain, p.226/228
5. *Legislation Against Terrorism*, a consultation document published by the UK Government. It's also on the web at: www.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm41/4178.html
6. *Ibid*. Particulary Chapters 7 (Arrests) and 8 (Detention).
7. *Ibid*. Chapter 3 (Definition of Terrorism) para. 3.10 and 3.11
8. *Ibid*. Chapter 3, para 3.16 and 3.17
9. *Criminal Justice and Public Order Act*, 1994, Section 60.
10. *Legislation Against Terrorism*, Chapter 4 (Proscription).
11. *Legislation Against Terrorism*, Chapter 12 (Ancillary Offences).
12. *cf* Almost any of the UK national newspapers for Saturday June 19th 1999.

Prisoners Of War

"If the 'innocent' deserve our support, then the 'guilty' deserve it even more." - Nikos Maziotis, imprisoned Greek anarchist.

We believe that *all* prisoners are political prisoners. Sadly, however, we could not hope to cover everybody inside, so below we have listed only a small selection of long term direct action prisoners. It is *vital* that we support these people. Life inside can be hard, but most of all it is just extremely boring and isolating. By writing to a prisoner you can help to alleviate both. Writing to someone you don't know may seem daunting at first, but it does get easier. You could start by sending them a short note on a postcard to brighten up their cell wall. Always remember that all mail is read by screws so don't say anything that could incriminate you or others. For details of more ways you can help to support prisoners, and for listings of short term or remand prisoners, contact the *London Anarchist Black Cross* (ABC) or get a copy of *Spirit of Freedom* newsletter (see Prison Support Organisations at the end of this article for their contact details.)



UK Prisoners

Barry Horne VC 2141, HMP Full Sutton, Moor Lane, York, YO4 1PS, UK. Animal liberationist sentenced to a total of 18 years for arson at several premises on the Isle of Wight and attempted arson in Bristol. Currently recovering following a 68 day hunger strike protesting against vivisection.

Tony Humphries AP 7965, HMP Swaleside, Brabazon Road, Eastchurch, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 4DZ, UK. Tony is an animal liberation activist who was sentenced in March 1999 to 7 years imprisonment for conspiracy to cause explosions and 2 years (to run concurrently) for possession of explosives.

Ellen Moxley, Ulla Roder and Angie Zelter are all at: HM Institution Corton Vale, Corton Road, Stirling, FK9 5NU, Scotland after they broke into a floating laboratory complex on Loch Goil in Scotland where the sonar signals for Trident nuclear submarines are tested. They threw computers, printers, fax machines, telephones into the water and destroyed a test room, an aerial antenna and an outside winch. They are currently all on remand awaiting trial in September 1999. For details of the outcome of this trial contact: Trident Ploughshares 2000, The Greenhouse, 42-46 Bethel Street, Norwich, NR2 1NR, UK. Tel: 01603 611953. E-mail: reforest@gn.apc.org

Simon 'Badger' Richards BH 4011, HMP Blundestone, D Wing, Lowestoft, Suffolk, UK. Was at Guildford anti-road camp (see page 2 in *Do or Die* No. 7). Sentenced to four years for animal liberation actions.

Hillgrove Farm in Oxfordshire is the last breeder of cats for vivisection in the UK. It has been the target of continuous direct action and demonstrations for the last three years. There have been a number of people sent to prison for various connected offences. For more details on the campaign against Hillgrove Farm, and recent prisoner updates, contact: Save the Hillgrove Cats, Box CB, 111 Magadalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RQ, UK. Telephone: 0121 632 6460.



The GANDALF Trial Update

In January 1996, as a result of a massive joint police and security services operation, four editors of *Green Anarchist* (GA) newspaper and two people from the *Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group* (ALFSG) magazine were arrested for conspiracy to incite persons unknown to commit criminal damage. Over the next three years one person was found not guilty, but three editors of *GA* were found guilty and sentenced to three years imprisonment. They were eventually released on appeal and the remaining two cases were dropped. The trial has enormous implications for anyone involved in, or giving favourable coverage to, illegal direct action. (For more details of this case see the letters on page 230 of this issue, page 129 in *Do or Die* No. 7, or write to *Green Anarchist* at: BM 1715, London, WC1N 3XX, UK.)

Italian Anarchists

On 5th March 1998 Italian police arrested 3 anarchists on serious charges of subversive association for the purpose of constituting an armed gang. They were accused of various cases of direct action linked to the popular struggle against the construction of the high speed railway through the Val Di Susa in Piemonte. Now only one of the 3 arrested anarchists remains alive. Edoardo Massari, a 38 year old anarchist from Ivrea, died in the Vallette prison in Turin on 28th March 1998. The authorities said he had hanged himself with a bed sheet. Maria Soledad Rosas, 22 years old and from Argentina, hanged herself on 11 July—choosing the same day and time to die as her companion Eduardo. The anarchist and grassroots oppositional movements have reacted to the deaths angrily and forcefully. On 4th April, in Turin following Edoardo's death, there was a several thousand strong national demonstration, and the day after Maria's death there was a street blockade there as well. The surviving prisoner, Silvano Pelissero, undertook a month long hungerstrike until on 22nd July he was finally transferred from the maximum security prison of Novara to house arrest.

Also in Italy the four anarchists below, already serving 3 years and 4 months each for a bank robbery in 1994, received an additional 6 years and 6 months sentence (apart from Carlo who got 7 years) for another bank robbery. **Antonio Budini, Via Prati Nuovi 7, 27058 Voghera, Pavia, Italy. Jean Weir, Via Bartolo Longo 92, 00156, Rome, Italy. Carlo Tesseri, Via Leopardi 2, 61034 Fossombrone, Pesaro, Italy. Christos Stratigopulos, Via Sforzesca 49, 28100 Novara, Italy.**

Orlando Campo, Via Delle Macchie 9, 57100 Livorno, Italy. Despite a complete lack of evidence Orlando was sentenced to 22 years imprisonment for allegedly participating in the kidnapping and eventual murder of a wealthy Italian businessmans wife in 1990. Orlando has always maintained his innocence of these charges. His sentence has been seen as the opening blow in the series of frame-ups of Italian anarchists in recent years.

For more details on the repression and frame-ups experienced by anarchists in Italy over the last few years get a copy of *Uncontrollables*—for a copy send an A4 SAE and a donation for copying to: BM Ignition, London, WC1N 3XX, UK.

North American Prisoners

Albert Cinque Woodfox 72148, CCR Upper F Isolation, LA State Prison, Angola, LA 70712, USA and Herman Wallace 76759, CCR3, LA State Prison, Angola, LA 70712, USA. Albert Woodfox and Herman Hooks Wallace are two former Black Panthers charged with the 1972 stabbing and death of Brent Miller, a Louisiana prison guard. Hooks has received continual harassment for his prison activism. In February 1999, after a sham retrial for the original 1972 conviction, Albert was sentenced to natural life with no possibility of release.

Harold Thompson 93992, Turney Industrial Prison, Route 1, Only, Tennessee 37140-9709, USA. Harold is an anarchist who in 1979 was sentenced to life and 50 years for the robbery of a jewellers, killing a police informer who had murdered his partner and a shooting incident in Ohio. He was also later given an extra 32 years for a failed escape attempt. An active jailhouse lawyer that helps other inmates Harold has recently been brutally attacked, robbed and placed in segregation for his own safety due to inmates from the racist White Ayran Brotherhood working hand-in-hand with prison officials. Please write civil letters on Harold's behalf to: Warden Jack Morgan, Turney Centre Industrial Prison, Route 1, Only, Tennessee, 37140-9709, USA. Harold also needs around £100 to file a lawsuit so, if you can, please send donations to: Friends of Harold Thompson, PO Box 375, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 2XL, UK. A collection of Harold's writings and poetry entitled *They Will Never Get Us All!* is available for £2.00 (including postage) from: Plain Wordz, PO Box 381, Huddersfield, HD1 3XX, UK.



Leonard Peltier 89637-132, PO Box 1000, Leavenworth, KS 66048, USA. Leonard, an American Indian Movement activist, was targeted as a subversive by the secret Counter Intelligence Programme (COINTELPRO) operations and was framed for the murder of two FBI agents in 1976 for which he is serving two consecutive life sentences. Currently seriously ill he is being refused proper medical attention. For more information contact: Leonard Peltier Defence Committee, PO Box 583, Lawerence, KS 66044, USA.

Linn (Lenny) Chavez is a 36 year old American Indian Movement (AIM) activist and Kiowa man. He was cutting wood at home when he was attacked by a racist gang member. The man grabbed Lenny's chainsaw and was threatening him and others with it. Fearing for himself and his family, Lenny drew his penknife and inflicted minor injuries to the attacker. Whilst the racist went free Lenny was charged with attempted murder. Letters of support and donations can be sent to: Lenny Chavez, c/o South and Meso Indian Rights Center, PO Box 28703, Oakland, CA 94694, USA. E-mail: saiic@igc.apc.org

The eco-revolutionary group **MOVE** first surfaced in Philadelphia during the early 1970s. They had an uncompromising belief in revolution. Living communally they ate raw food, eschewed drugs and alcohol, helped homeless people, staged demonstrations and attacked the government and system which they saw as the root of all problems. As a result of their actions MOVE experienced intense state harassment and repression. Members were savagely beaten—with some of the women suffering miscarriages as a result—and during one attack by the police a 3 week old baby had its skull crushed and died. All this culminated in the 1985 siege and bombing of their commune by the police. During the shootings and explosions that ensued six adults and five children were killed. The survivors, known as the MOVE 9, were framed for the murder of a cop and sentenced to a sentence of 100 years each. In 1998 one of the 9, Merle Africa, died in very suspicious circumstances in prison. The others still imprisoned are:

Debbie Simms Africa 006307, Janet Holloway Africa 006308, Janine Philips Africa 006309 are all at: SCI Cambridge Springs, 451 Fullerton Avenue, Cambridge Springs, PA 16403-1238, USA. Michael Davis Africa AM4973 and Charles Simms Africa AM4975 are both at: SCI Grateford, PO Box 244, Grateford, PA 19426-0244, USA. William Philips Africa AM4984 and

Rod Coronado Released!

Rod is a Native American who was imprisoned in 1995 for a number of direct action activities. He's an inspiring person who has a long history of taking militant direct action with Sea Shepherd, Earth First! and the Animal Liberation Front. Here are some of Rod's thoughts on prison and what it feels like to have been recently released:

"In March 1999 I left the Federal Correction Institution where I was captive for nearly four years. I left prison, but I have not arrived in freedom. Everyday I was imprisoned was a day of remembrance for me. Time to reflect on the reality of being an indigenous guerrilla fighting neo-colonial forces in the late 20th Century, and the cost such resistance required of all those indigenous warriors the world over who have died defending the worldview that recognises the Earth as our Mother. Only a hundred years ago my ancestors were fighting a guerrilla war against Mexican soldiers and American colonialists. Our babies heads were smashed against trees. Our women (those not actively up in arms) were raped. Our warriors were hung with barbed wire. Just one hundred years ago. I am fighting for what they died for. And I will never be free until all the Earth's children are allowed to peacefully pursue an existence in harmony with Her powers. If that means more prison, I am ready. If that means death I am prepared. But the Invader will not take me or my resistance peacefully. Of that I am certain.

We owe that much to our ancestors. To all who have been murdered, not died, fighting for what we now also believe in. Earth First! and the Animal and Earth Liberation Fronts are just contemporary manifestations of an ancient spirit and economic globalisation is just the modern equivalent of Western European Colonialism. The timeless continuum of the struggle between good and evil.

But I'll fight, not because I have to (many of us in the 'First World' don't have to) but because I want to. I can think of no more honourable or noble purpose to utilise this life for than to carry this torch of resistance a little further. Realizing always that we can win simply by never surrendering. Freedom to me may be something I personally never fully experience but, like my ancestors, it's something I'm most willing to die for."

Rod also produces an excellent zine called *Strong Hearts*. For the latest copy send $3.00 to: Black and Green, POB 11703, Eugene, OR 97440, USA.



Delbert Orr Africa AM4985 are both at: SCI Dallas Drawer K, Dallas, PA 18612, USA. Edward Goodman Africa AM4974 is at: SCI Camp Hill, PA 17011-0200, USA.

For more information read *25 Years on the MOVE* published by Friends of MOVE at: PO Box 14129, London, WC12 8GR, UK or contact MOVE directly at: PO Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143, USA. E-mail: movellja@aol.com

Mumia Abu Jamal AM8335, SCI Greene, 1040 East Roy Furman Highway, Waynesburg, PA 15370-8090, USA. Ex-Black Panther, radical journalist and MOVE supporter, Mumia was framed for the murder of a cop and is currently on Death Row where his execution is imminent. For more information and details on solidarity actions contact Mumia Must Live! at: 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3XX, UK or look at the website at: http://www.mumia.org/

Robert H. Wilson 640289, Pack Unit One, 2400 Wallace Pack Road, Navasota, TX 77869, USA. Robert Standing Deer Wilson is a Native American prison activist now in his late 70s. In 1978 he exposed a government plot to assassinate Leonard Peltier. He has been on hunger strikes to protest the inhumane conditions of super-maximum prisons.

Silvia Barladini 05125-054, FCI Danbury, CT 06811, USA. A veteran left activist who fought against the Vietnam war and in support of the Black Liberation and Puerto Rican independence movements, Silvia is currently serving 43 years after being convicted of liberating Black Liberation Army prisoner Assata Shakur and conspiracy against the US Government. She is in bad health due to cancer and there is a campaign to get her paroled or transferred to her native Italy. For details of this contact: Release Silvia, 3543 18th Street, Box 30, San Francisco, CA 94110, USA.

Ted Kaczynski 04475-046, US Pen-Admin Max Facility, PO Box 8500, Florence, CO 81226, USA. Serving life, with no chance of parole, for a 17 year long bombing campaign against industrial society.

For updates and news on all 'political' prisoners in the USA get a copy of *Raze The Walls!* a quarterly magazine with a balance of writings by and about prisoners and prison resistance in North America. It also has articles on broader revolutionary theory and activity from a class struggle anarchist perspective. For a copy send $3.00 to: Raze The Walls! 2351 College Station Road, Box 523, Athens, GA 30605, USA.

Australian Prisoner

Dennis Bruce Walker MIN245312, PO Box 656, Grafton 2460, NSW, Australia. Dennis is an Aboriginal activist who has been sentenced to 5 years for an incident that occurred whilst trying to protect an aboriginal sacred site. Is currently waiting for an appeal and seeking a retrial.

Prisoner Support Organisations

The following groups are the major prisoner support organisations. For a more comprehensive list see *Do or Die* No. 7, page 136. If writing to any of them enclose an SAE, or a donation if you can afford it, as they all run on peoples wages or giros and so are usually broke.

Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group, BCM 1160, London, WC1N 3XX, UK. Support group for animal liberation prisoners which also produces an excellent magazine covering all aspects of animal liberation.

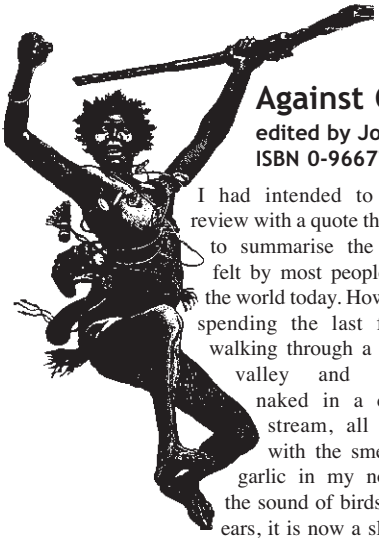
Earth Liberation Prisoners, c/o Cornerstone Resource Centre, 16 Sholebroke Avenue, Chapeltown, Leeds, LS7 3HB, UK. E-mail: earthlibprisoner@hotmail.com Support for all ecological direct action prisoners. Publishes the invaluable *Spirit of Freedom* newsletter with up-to-date prisoner listings.

Haven Distribution, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3XX, UK. A free books and magazines to prisoners scheme. Donations of books, magazines and money are always welcome.

London Anarchist Black Cross, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3XX, UK. E-mail: londonabc@hotmail.com International support network for anarchist, revolutionary and class struggle prisoners. Contact London ABC for details of your local group. Also produces *Taking Liberties* magazine.

Vegan Prisoners Support Group, PO Box 194, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 3HD, UK. Does excellent work on getting the vegan needs of prisoners met in police cells and prisons.

Book Reviews



Against Civilisation—Readings and Reflections

edited by John Zerzan (Uncivilized Books, USA,1999.)
ISBN 0-9667758-0-5

I had intended to start this review with a quote that attempts to summarise the alienation felt by most people living in the world today. However, after spending the last few hours walking through a lush green valley and swimming naked in a cool clear stream, all the while with the smell of wild garlic in my nostrils and the sound of birdsong in my ears, it is now a slight shock to be sat in front of a humming computer in a centrally heated and sterile house. Everything around me feels distant—cold, unimportant and somehow not *quite* real. Raising my eyes and looking around me I see representatives and symbols of the alienated and dysfunctional world we inhabit. I can hear the clock on the wall above me ticking. The television sits in the corner of the room with a malevolent prescence, and somebody is mowing the chemically soaked grass in a never ending attempt to restrain it from breaking free of its four straight borders. My eyes are starting to hurt from the glare of the screen, my mind feels slightly numb and I can feel a barely controlled desire to switch the computer off and cuddle up with my best friend on the sofa.

These aren't isolated problems, but indicators to the totality of the horrendous situation we find ourselves in. While here in the UK some radical ecologists are trying to understand the concept of capitalism, others are seeing this as only a relatively recent and superficial phenomenon. This growing resistance does not view capitalism, the State, the work-consume-die trinity, school, the media, technology or patriarchy as the cause of our problems. It sees all these and more as acting together to form a complex web of hierarchical power relations—civilisation.

For this strain of thought to have any useful meaning it must be placed within a framework. As one attempt to do this *Against Civilisation* contains 51 excerpts or complete texts from this broad current. It is divided into five logically ordered sections grouped under the chapter headings of: *Before Civilisation, The Coming of Civilisation, The Nature of Civilisation, The Pathology of Civilisation* and *The Resistance to Civilisation*.

In the first chapter, illustrated by writings from, amongst others, Fredy Perlman and Marshall Sahlins, we are given evidence that pre-civilized societies were the original Stateless societies—'anarchies'. Whether by conjecture or study, numerous evidence of this is provided, and the uniform message is agreed on; that before the advent of civilisation humans were better off—healthier, well fed and with a much more relaxed, ecological and balanced lifestyle.

Unfortunately this was not to last, and the second section explores some theories of the origins and reasons for the imposition of civilisation—with the conclusion drawn by Zerzan himself that the transformation from a gatherer-hunter based culture into one dominated by agriculture is to blame for this 'fall' from the idyll of our pre-civilised lives. The next two sections, The *Nature of Civilisation* and *The Pathology of Civilisation*, are closely linked. Amongst other pieces T. Fulano likens civilisation to a jetliner, plummeting noisily onwards towards inevitable catastrophe, whilst Freud explores the horror of humans tangled in the matrix of power and control.

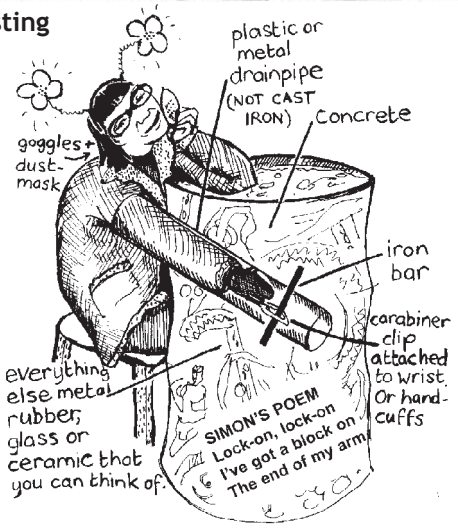
All the previous reading leaves us with little hope—but the fires of resistance are re-kindled in the final section; *The Resistance to Civilisation*. This is the inspiring piece of the book—Kirkpatrick Sale explores some of the history of Luddism in 19th Century Britain, and has some excellent reasons for its failure—most still of particular relevance to us now. Feral Faun calls for a Feral Revolution and the Anti-Authoritarians Anonymous conclude with a heart wrenching and powerful inditement of the full horrors of the world as we know it.

The era we live in now is the most unstable that humanity has ever existed in. Alienation is a 'normal' condition and the levels of pschyopathy, suicide, fear, delusion and depression are increasing day by day. Couple this with the war against life that the ecology of the earth is currently in the frontlines of, and you have a spiralling death trip. If we are to survive then, let alone begin to truly live, all this—and more—must be undone, and this book is an important contribution to that struggle. It seeks to fan the sparks of life and resistance that are glowing in this dark time, and should be read by all who realise we have lost much, have more to lose, and yet have a world to gain...



Copse—A Cartoon Book of Tree Protesting

by Kate Evans and friends
(Orange Dog Productions, UK, 1998.)
ISBN 0-9532674-0-7


plastic or metal drainpipe (NOT CAST IRON)
Concrete
goggles + dust-mask
iron bar
carabiner clip attached to wrist. Or hand-cuffs
everything else metal rubber, glass or ceramic that you can think of.
SIMON'S POEM
Lock-on, lock-on
I've got a block on
The end of my arm

The last seven years have seen a flowering of direct action sites primarily fighting the construction of roads, but also airports, opencast mining, quarrying, clearcutting, supermarkets and housing schemes. All part of industrial development's attack on communities and the wild. Site based direct action has involved ten of thousands of people, successfully defeated the biggest roadbuilding programme in Europe, saved countless ecologies and created some of the most amazing and strangest communities of resistance ever.

Yet too often our stories have been told by outsiders. Our actions have been assimilated back into *their* system by *their* words. *Copse*, as its introduction says, is; "subjective history, spoken history, a history of resistance and history in resistance…This is our two fingers to all the sucka m.c's who've spoken for us, who've mediated and twisted our words over the years."

Consisting of dozens of interviews, peppered with amazing photos and cool cartoons, *Copse* gives a real idea of what being involved in direct action site counter-culture is really like. It's vibrant, it's alive, it's hungover, it's radical—it's a bit weird. It's life on the edge; it's life under the table. It's intense conflict with the State followed the next week by sun shimmered skinny-dipping with your friends. *Copse* doesn't gloss over our problems or romanticise our actions. It's about a massive gang of mates, who met in struggle, doing extraordinary things—sometimes badly, sometimes brilliantly.

Kate's one of the crew so people trust her. By basing it on interviews she's got the stories and motivations of dozens of people, the backbones of campaigns, who'd never do interviews with the media or write an article for a radical magazine. Read this book and you'll be privy to some really honest conversations with some incisive, interesting and fuckin' funny people.

The photos are some of the most breathtaking images of our lives that I've seen and the beautifully drawn cartoons encapsulate site life brilliantly—resistance, porridge, passion and mud.

Though its smooth joy-to-stroke colour cover gives it the outside impression of a coffee table book *Copse* is not for the smug middle classes, but for those who want to take action. For this reason it ends with a 20 page *Beginners Guide to Tree Protesting*. This tells you how to build lock-ons, benders, treehouses and includes lots of diagrams showing you those all important knots, tunnelling and tree climbing techniques; not to mention how to counter common camp diseases and firepit cooking recipes.



Copse is essentially a family album—or maybe an almanac of the class '94-'98. A few years we can definitely be proud of. You'll be inspired by *Copse*. You'll be amazed by *Copse*. You'll laugh reading *Copse*. You'll learn a lot from *Copse*. Read *Copse*. To get a copy send a cheque or Postal Order for £12.50 (payable to Orange Dog Productions) to: Orange Dog Productions, 7 The Green, Biddestone, Near Chippenham, Wiltshire, UK.



Dole Autonomy versus the Re-Imposition of Work:

analysis of the current tendency to workfare in the UK
by *Aufheben* (Self Published, UK, 1998.)
No ISBN



Gorblimey missus, it's all kickin' off... dole riots in the 1930s

This excellent pamphlet is an analysis of the continuing struggle against Labour's New Deal and before that the Tories' Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and Project Work schemes. Both these recent government initiatives are forms of 'workfare'—getting the unemployed to work for their dole money.

The *Aufheben* crew set out the historical background to the present fashion for workfare, and then go on to analyse the opposition to the JSA/New Deal and its successes and failures. One central part of the pamphlet is a criticism of unemployed political radicals (that's you and me folks!) for their failure to get involved in the struggle to defend the dole. They point out that it isn't that there is a lack of dole activism—just that it isn't directed against the attacks on the dole. During the period of the implementation of the JSA and the New Deal there have been a significant number of large militant protests predominantly involving the unemployed—these however have been largely directed against road-building or have been channelled into activities like Reclaim the Streets street parties.

So why haven't the eco-protesters got involved in the struggle against workfare? Why is it that a strong political culture that relies on the dole for its very existence chooses not to defend its own immediate interests but rather concentrates on altruistic 'causes' like saving trees or stopping roads? The *Aufheben* pamphlet represents the choice facing activists as one between the often 'mundane' but necessary struggle against the dole cutbacks versus the 'exciting and glamorous' distraction of eco-activism. It is asserted that doley eco-activists are directly affected by the JSA/New Deal—here their real interests are at stake, whereas in their eco-campaigning this is not the case—it is pure altruism—fighting for a separate and alienated cause.

However, although tree protest sites or Reclaim the Streets events are superficially about the issue or 'cause' at stake; snails or roads or whatever—this isn't the only or even the most important motivation behind those who get involved in such activities. And even less is it the case that the issue or cause that these activities are superficially about is the cause of their success and widespread popularity. Actually tree sites and street parties etc. have been much more about our needs and transforming our everyday relations and fighting for ourselves than the anti-JSA campaign has been. Which is why one has taken off and the other hasn't. When people say that the anti-JSA campaign has been boring, they are expressing a real need—it isn't just an arbitrary criticism. What they are expressing is exactly this—that although more radical in *content* than the eco-protests, the



anti-JSA campaign has been much less radical in *form*. For the most part, the anti-JSA/New Deal campaign has taken the form of a typical political cause or campaign—the familiar chore and drudgery of endless leafleting, building for the demo etc. which you feel duty bound to engage in, little different to the activities of the Socialist Workers Party or any other political party or campaigning organisation.

By contrast, in tree protests, the form which packages the content actually becomes more significant than what the protest is supposedly about. What you're DOING is often more important than what you're doing it 'about'. Because the main point is that we take back control of our lives—if we do this superficially 'for' trees—so what? Living on site offers the attraction of transforming your life; this is what has drawn so many people to the protest site thing. I would argue that the road or whatever is in fact often secondary to the creation of community and the discovery of ourselves and our collective power involved in site living. In this way people are directly expressing their own interests. As Debord wrote:

"Individuals and communities have to create places and events suitable for the appropriation… of their total history. In this game's changing space, and in the freely chosen variations in the game's rules, the autonomy of place can be rediscovered without the reintroduction of an exclusive attachment to the land, thus bringing back the reality of the voyage and of life understood as a voyage which contains its entire meaning within itself." (*Society of the Spectacle,* para. 178.)

It is protest sites which have made anti-roads campaigning into the thing it is. Imagine roads campaigning pre-direct action—nothing could be more boring—an endless round of public enquiries, legal challenges etc. It is clearly not the 'issue' that was the decisive factor in getting people excited and involved but the direct action and particularly sites (for all their faults) that caught the imagination and caused the anti-roads movement to take off in a such a big way.

My modest comments here have only touched on one argument in this pamphlet that seemed to be particularly relevant to the readers of *Do or Die*. The pamphlet as a whole contains much else besides this and is an excellent piece of work that deserves to be widely read. Whether or not you are on the dole—THIS AFFECTS YOU—inform yourself.

The original 40 page A5 pamphlet is now out of print but you can get a photocopy for £1.75 inc. postage (sterling cheques only payable to 'Aufheben') from: Aufheben, c/o Brighton Unemployed Centre Ltd. PO Box 2536, Rottingdean, Brighton, BN2 6LX, UK. Also on the web at: http://jefferson.village.Virginia.EDU/~spoons/aut_html/auf1edit.htm

Simon Jones—Killed by Casualisation

Simon Jones was killed on April 24th 1998, on his first day at work at Shoreham docks near Brighton. Simon had been getting hassle from the dole under Labour's 'New Deal'. The dole office sent him to a recruitment agency—Personnel Selection. This agency then sent him to work as a casual worker in the docks at Shoreham. Within two hours he was dead, his head crushed and partially severed by a two-tonne crane grab. He was being paid about £5 an hour for one of the most dangerous jobs in the country and had been given no proper training. This shows clearly the whole inter-relationship of workfare, dole clampdowns and the casualisation and 'flexibilisation' of labour under Labour's 'Third Way' and where it is leading: more exploitation, more injuries and more deaths.



On the 1st September 1998, on what would have been Simon's 25th birthday, some of his friends and other supporters occupied the Shoreham dock where he was killed. The docks were forced to close down for the day, sending all their casual workers home on full pay. Two days later the protesters paid a visit to the Brighton offices of Personnel Selection. The office was shut down for the day, and again workers were sent home on full pay. A campaign of direct action continues in order to prevent the politicians getting away with sweeping Simon's death under the carpet. People like Simon Jones get killed at work all the time and nothing gets done about it. Not this time.

For further details contact:
Simon Jones Memorial Campaign, c/o PO Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2DX, UK. Telephone and fax: 01273 685913.
E-mail: action@simonjones.org.uk Web: http://www.simonjones.org.uk/



Earth First! and the Anti-Roads Movement

Radical environmentalism and comparative social movements by Derek Wall (Routledge, London, 1999.)
ISBN 0-415-19064-9



Yes, it's another expensive academic book about ecological direct action, but the difference is that this one's actually quite good. For one thing the author, having been involved in some of the events he describes, knows what he's talking about. Also, by largely basing his book on interviews with people with a long term involvement, it's (sometimes depressingly) accurate—although albeit in a dry academic way that fails to get across any of the passion, excitement or anger behind events.

Wall begins by taking a look at what he considers the history of similar struggles in the past; from Victorian conservation societies, through the early 1970s upsurge in green concerns that led to the formation of Friends of the Earth (FoE) and The Ecology (later Green) Party, to the 1980s peace and animal rights movements and the massive increase in 'green' concerns around 1989. Whilst acknowledging that many people in Earth First! (EF!) feel more of an affinity with the broader history of "popular protest, revelry and riot" (p.18), Wall argues that this obscures "the distinctive nature of modern activism" (p.19). In many ways this is true, EF! is—at least in some respects—the bastard offspring of middle class single issue campaigns like the peace and green movements. However much we'd like it to be it's not the latest upsurge of class struggle from the line that includes the Luddites and so on. Thankfully EF! has cast off a lot of the problems inherited from its 'parents' and has tried to consciously place itself in this tradition of struggle, but it's as well to be aware of these issues as they're bound to have an influence for years to come.

The book provides a detailed history of EF! in Britain (and a briefer account of similar movements in other countries) from the early rainforest actions funded from donations by eccentric billionaire Sir James Goldsmith to increasing involvement in anti-road campaigns. Also of interest is the early conflicts between 'militants' and 'moderates' within EF!—largely around the issue of sabotage. "It is only a minor simplification to suggest that those activists drawn from the peace movement saw EF! (UK) as a means of promoting mass NVDA [non-violent direct action] of a largely symbolic form, while those from an animal liberation background regarded EF! as a vehicle for more militant tactics" (p.55). Moving through the various anti-roads campaigns, Wall gives a detailed account of all the major conflicts—Twyford, Solsbury Hill, M11, Pollock, M65 etc., quoting heavily from various interviews to give a good impression of what was going on.

Relations with other groups are also discussed, including largely uncritical alliances with rich country landowners and Militant at different times, but largely focussing on EF!'s bumpy relationship with FoE and Greenpeace. From an initial position of hostility, these mainstream green groups increasingly began to accept direct action tactics (although Greenpeace had long practised a very controlled, media centered corruption of direct action)—perhaps looking for credibility in the youth market. Despite this, public arguments still broke out over various acts of sabotage such as the Newbury Reunion Rampage. In one interesting section Charles Secrett (FoE director) actually comes out in favour of sabotage; "certain types of damage to property…[like] pouring sugar into a bulldozer [which is] going through a SSSI—I [don't] have a problem with that." (p.86) Obviously he still can't stomach militant mass action though, condemning the arson at Newbury, and being especially disturbed by people targeting the media for acting as stand in police evidence gathering teams, "You can't come into an event like that…hitting a BBC cameraman just because he was filming what was going on". (p.86)

One particularly interesting section of the book is on 'activist involvement' and looks at how and why



people became involved in EF! and similar groups. Through comparing interviews, peoples' gradual involvement and strengthening ties to the network are seen. Many of the interviewees were previously members of green groups (FoE, Greenpeace, The Green Party) or other political organisations (e.g.: Marxist groups) but became frustrated with them and felt more attracted to EF!s less formal organisation and emphasis on direct action. 'Biographical availability' is also seen as an important factor—people who get involved usually have plenty of spare time and few commitments (mostly with no kids and on the dole or students). This exclusiveness is reinforced with the culture of the movement, a double edged sword that creates "a greater capacity for collective action, greater tenacity…greater satisfaction from movement participation" (p.165), but also "higher degrees of membership coercion, narrowing the number and range of people who will participate". (p.165) Obviously the challenge now is to build and sustain a culture of resistance (as opposed to a subculture of lifestyle) that still manages to be as inclusive as possible.

Related to this are Wall's ideas about how the movement as a whole grows (or doesn't). He argues that external factors, like how open or closed to influence the ruling political system is, strongly affects the forms that any resistance takes. Britain is seen as a fairly 'closed' system—parties in power often have large majorities and freedom to act, while minority parties which could gain some power under a proportional representation system are blocked. This makes confrontational action outside of the parliamentary system easier to start. Also 'costs' in terms of the level of state repression are fairly low, although increasing constantly (and of course they're only low as a result of the relative impotence of the resistance here). In contrast many other European countries try harder to keep grievences within the system, but crack down harder on whatever refuses to be contained. He argues that the wave of green concern in around 1989 seemed like an 'opening' that green groups felt they could use—they were better received by the powers that be, which encouraged them to become more 'mainstream' i.e: moderate and professional. However they still failed to get any access to real power, which disillusioned many of their members and left the field open for more militant ideas to grow, "the turmoil within the Green Party is simply one symptom of a wider crisis. Other signs include…the haemorrage from FoE of local members who are frustrated by the restrictions placed on them by the leadership and are attracted by the more confrontational direct approach of anarchist influenced groups." (p.120) He argues that this is a gap EF! formed and grew to fill. Another important element he identifies is finding 'mobilisation targets' where real, but so far vaguely expressed, concerns and desires people have can 'condense' into action—roads was one such issue and resulted in a wave of ecological direct action.

Overall this book has a lot of interesting points to make about EF! and the wider movement, despite taking an odd view of this wider movement. By trying to fit it into a 'green' pigeonhole Wall sidelines the fact that we often have more ideas in common with radical unionists than Greenpeace. If it's often dry and dispassionate, that can also help in taking an 'objective' look at who we are and where we're at. In many ways it makes a good companion to Kate Evan's *Copse*, which gives the 'subjective' side of events and a real sense of what it all felt like at the time. One major gripe is the price—sixteen quid for a paperback is ridiculous. One to get on the buy none, get one free offer at all major bookshops I reckon!





Pacifism as Pathology

Reflections on the Role of Armed Struggle in North America by Ward Churchill (Arbeiter Ring Publishing, Canada, 1999.) ISBN 1-894037-07-3



Pacifism as Pathology—Notes on an American Pseudopraxis is the title of Ward Churchill's well-argued and persuasive essay criticising the form and ideology of non-violent political action in North America. The essay was first published in 1986, and is reprinted in this book alongside an essay by Mike Ryan who further develops the arguments in the context of the Canadian peace movement. Though Churchill's essay was written in response to the political scene of well over a decade ago, his arguments are (perhaps worringly) equally thought-provoking and relevant to the contemporary manifestations of non-violent political action that purport to have revolutionary methods and goals.

Churchill's main argument is that philosophical non-violence/pacifism—which promotes the idea that the violence of the State can be transcended through purity of purpose, moral superiority and non-violence—is a delusional and counter-revolutionary political movement. Despite recognising the fact that many adherents to non-violence have sincere revolutionary aspirations (i.e: that they reject the present social order and wish to see its total abolition and replacement) Churchill claims that their non-violent methods serve to constrain them to the realm of 'pseudo-praxis' which, at best, is utterly ineffectual and, at worst, maintains and reinforces the hierarchical and exploitative status quo.

Churchill argues that this pseudo-praxis of pacifism is rooted in an ideology rife with internal contradictions and limitations and for its internal logic depends upon "fostering a view of social conflict as a morality play." (p.38) In this 'play' the State and its violence are "bad" or "negative", their pacifist opponents "good" or "positive" and it is through the triumph of morality alone that revolution will come about. Hence, "Pacifists, with seemingly endless repetition, pronounce that the negativity of the modern corporate-fascist state will atrophy through defection and neglect once there is a sufficiently positive social vision to take its place." (p.30) Such a view is clearly the stuff of pure idealism rather than realism, for the state is not a moral adversary, it cannot be persuaded to 'wither away'. As Churchill rightly points out; "Absurdity clearly abounds when suggesting that the state will refrain from using all necessary physical force to protect against undesired forms of change and threats to its safety." (p.44)

Taking the experience of the Jews in the Holocaust as an in-depth (and highly controversial) example, the author illustrates the ultimate futility of non-violent resistance. He suggests that the pacifist response of the Jews which was intended to promote "social responsibility" and not further exacerbate their persecution, in fact did the opposite and led to the Jews effectively colluding with the genocidal aims of their Nazi oppressors. Whilst not suggesting that the Holocaust could have been prevented by armed struggle on the part of the Jews, Churchill, quoting Bruno Bettleheim (a former concentration camp inmate), says: "Rebellion could only have saved either the life they were going to lose anyway, or the lives of others…Inertia it was that led millions of Jews into the ghettos that the SS had created for them." (p.36)

Churchill recognises that this example is extreme yet he suggests that: "it is precisely this extremity which makes the example useful; the Jewish experience reveals with stark clarity the basic illogic at the very core of pacifist conceptions of morality and political action." (p.38) The illogic to which he is referring is the idea that moral superiority can overcome state oppression; the moral superiority being based upon an unwillingness to take up arms and use violence as a tactic. This notion is so central to the 'pathology' of pacifism that the dichotomies between good (non-violent) and evil (violent) are found throughout. Of course, in order to sustain a belief in the ideology examples of good (non-violence) triumphing over evil (violence) are vital. Here, Churchill argues that pacifists are guilty of considerable revisionism in order to make history compatible with their beliefs.

Churchill looks in particular at the popularly quoted 'successes' of the movements headed by MK Gandhi in India, and Dr. Martin Luther King in North America. In both these instances he argues that



the 'success' of the movements in gaining their demands depended massively upon the threat of violence from other sources against the British and American governments respectively. In the case of North America, the pressure came from "the context of armed self-defense tactics being employed for the first time by rural black leaders…and the eruption of black urban enclaves…It also coincided with the increasing need of the American state for internal stability due to the unexpectedly intense and effective armed resistance mounted by the Vietnamese against US aggression in Southeast Asia." (p.43)

The importance of the misappropriation of history by pacifists becomes clear when we delve a little deeper into the psychology of it all. Clearly, as Churchill points out, these people do believe in the need for revolution, indeed they pronounce solidarity with those engaged in armed struggles in the Third World.

However, if they concede the historical fact that "there simply has never been a revolution, or even a substantial social reorganisation, brought into being on the basis of the principles of pacifism. In every instance, violence has been an integral requirement of the process of transforming the state" (p.45) then pacifists must begin to realize that there is not just an option to accept violence as a method of social change, but an imperative.

In the author's view the fact that pacifists are so reluctant to get to this point in their reasoning has much to do with the fact that for most, struggle against the state is not a daily reality. Indeed, their whole concern stems from a moral objection to the 'wickedness' of the state, rather any personal threat to their lives and communities. From such a privileged position, pacifists can espouse non-violent revolution and engage in political action without the risks most political dissidents take. Churchill does recognise that some pacifist practitioners have run real risks for their beliefs—such as the followers of Gandhi beaten to death in pursuit of non-violent revolution and those who have immolated themselves or incurred long prison sentences taking action for their cause. However, in the main, Churchill argues that North American pacifists are caught up in a politics of 'the comfort zone' based on the guiding question of "What sort of politics might I engage in which will both allow me to posture as a progressive *and* allow me to avoid incurring harm to *myself*?" (p.49) Not surprisingly, the political practice which ensues from this underlying concern is not—and never can be—revolutionary, since if it were the state would respond with force. Pacifist praxis is therefore necessarily ineffectual and unthreatening.

Churchill's description of the kind of praxis pacifists do engage in will seem all too familiar to



most of us who have been involved in non-violent activism. The protest march, sit-down blockade, rally etc. is revealed as the charade it really is. I found myself cringing at this point, recognising situations in which I had participated in the spectacle of symbolic action. Crucial aspects of this spectacle include the representatives of the state—the cops—invited to be there by the protest organisers, the elite band of stewards who ensure non-violence and 'responsible' conduct, and the protesters there to take part in a mass arrest for transgressing some minor law. The whole thing is conducted in such a way as to cause minimum disruption to the workings of the state (the police are warned in advance to expect an estimated number of arrests) and to make sure that no-one (cops or protesters) gets hurt. As Churchill comments: "in especially 'militant' actions, arrestees go limp, undoubtedly severely taxing the state's repressive resources by forcing the police to carry them bodily to the vans…(monitored all the while…to ensure that such 'police brutality' as pushing, shoving, or dropping an arrestee does not occur)." (p.54) The farcical ineffectuality of this symbolic protest is further emphasized when we remember that many of these demonstrations—especially in this country—are in protest at the use of state violence in the form of invasions of other countries (resulting in the loss of thousands of lives), production of nuclear weapons and other arms (potentially genocidal), or destruction of the environment (potentially ecocidal).



Churchill is also highly critical of the condemnation that non-violent activists make of the 'violent minority' who refuse to play the game of merely symbolic protest. He points out the blatant hypocrisy surrounding the willingness of non-violent activists to 'stand in solidarity' with armed groups in the Third World who are resisting Western imperialist aggression, whilst simultaneously distancing themselves from anyone who dares to suggest a violent response in their own country! Churchill argues that this is more evidence of 'comfort zone' politics which not only leads to ineffective action but is actually racist: "Massive and unremitting violence in the colonies is appalling to right-thinking people but ultimately acceptable when compared with the unthinkable alternative that any degree of real violence might be redirected against 'mother country radicals'." (p.62) By intentionally avoiding any degree of state violence themselves, non-violent activists *ensure* that the brunt of it is borne by both Third World communities and minority communities in the West.

Churchill's argument that the 'comfort zone' practise of symbolic non-violent action is easily accommodated by the State, is further developed in the follow on essay by Mike Ryan. He suggests that far from challenging State power, non-violent action is a valuable means by which the State can reinforce its legitimacy: "The message of civil disobedience as it is now practiced is this: There is opposition in society. The state deals with this opposition firmly but gently, *according to the law*. Unlike some countries, *Canada is a democratic society which tolerates opposition*. Therefore, it is unnecessary for anyone to step outside the forms of protest accepted by this



society; *it is unnecessary to resist*." (p.140) Such recuperation clearly has implications for those whose actions go beyond the accepted boundary by allowing the State to simply divide and rule. As 'the violent minority' are isolated and crushed, the State can claim the tacit (or sometimes explicit) support for its actions from those who remain (unbruised and morally superior) within the permitted boundaries of dissent.

Having thoroughly and convincingly dispensed with any notion that pacifism represents a serious and revolutionary challenge to the state, Churchill takes his analysis a step further. He argues that pacifism is actually pathological with delusional, racist and suicidal tendencies, and bears more hallmarks of a religious, rather than political, ideology. This makes it very difficult to argue people out of this mindset, as Churchill suggests; "hegemonic pacifism in advanced capitalist contexts proves itself supremely resistant—indeed virtually impervious—to mere logic and moral suasion." (p.93) He claims that the only way to overcome this 'illness' is through a therapeutic process designed to take the non-violent advocate "beyond the smug exercise of knee-jerk pacifist "superiority," and into the arena of effective liberatory praxis." (p.93) He proposes a strategy in which individuals are forced to challenge their ideas through a therapeutic discussion of values (to determine whether the subject really understands the bases of need for revolutionary social transformation), followed by 'Reality Therapy' (time spent living with oppressed communities to get the subject out of the comfort zone) and 'Demystification' (where the subject is taught to handle weapons and lose their psychological fear of guns.) All this should "have the effect of radically diminishing much of the delusion, the aroma of racism and the sense of privilege". (p.101)

It is probably right to accuse Churchill of consciously formulating a training programme to create revolutionaries, in fact he concedes that he is trying to aid in the development of "a strategy to win". Indeed I think if the proponents of non-violence were to enter the therapeutic process en masse the state would have more cause for concern than at any time in the preceding decades of pacifist "action". However, it would not be right to accuse the author of attempting to glorify violence and armed struggle, rather he is at pains to emphasise that "the desire for a non-violent and cooperative world is the healthiest of all psychological manifestations." (p.103) Rather the essay is written to provoke discussion and to get to the point where pacifists stop believing that their 'purity of purpose' will achieve the world we want.

Churchill's alternative to the pacifist strategy is made clear in a chapter entitled *Towards a Liberatory Praxis*. Defining praxis as "action consciously and intentionally guided by theory while simultaneously guiding the evolution of theoretical elaboration" (p.84) he argues that in advanced capitalist contexts far more emphasis has been placed on the theory and analysis of revolutionary struggle at the expense of the physical tactics which could be employed. It is partly for this reason that the doctrine of 'revolutionary non-violence' as a theory *and practice* has taken such a hold. In contrast, in the Third World "…it is considered axiomatic that revolution in non-industrialized areas all but *inherently* entails resort to armed struggle and violence." (p.85) With the immediacy of State violence to contend with, those engaged in liberatory struggles in the Third World have had to innovate a whole range of tactics—hence the highly developed art of guerrilla warfare. Churchill suggests that we learn from this example, though he is not advocating some 'cult of terror'. Rather we must recognise that "…in order to be effective and ultimately successful, any revolutionary movement within advanced capitalist nations must develop the broadest range of thinking/action by which to confront the state." (p.91) In this 'continuum of activity' non-violent action—crucially divorced from its delusional ideological trappings—has a role to play, but then so too does "armed self-defense, and…the realm of 'offensive' military operations." (p.91) In this situation, rather than non-violence being seen as the antithesis of violence and morally evaluated, both become useful tactics to be used as necessary in the revolutionary strategy.

Whether you agree with all of Churchill's arguments or not (and personally I have a few problems with the therapy stuff) his analysis of the pacifist doctrine is both eloquent and truly eye-opening. I spent some time involved in explicitly non-violent activism in the UK without really thinking through the ideological implications—it was simply the first direct action scene I came across. I only wish that I had read this book 7 years ago and hastened the learning process that has led me to many of the same conclusions as the author. Don't be put off, however, if you are happily involved in non-violent action; this book will shed new light on your activities. In short, I can't recommend this book highly enough—if you, your friend, your flatmate or your mum hasn't read this book then get a copy quick!



Making Punk A Threat Again

Profane Existence—The Best Cuts 1989-1993 published by Profane Existence (PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, USA.) ISBN 0-9662035-0-X

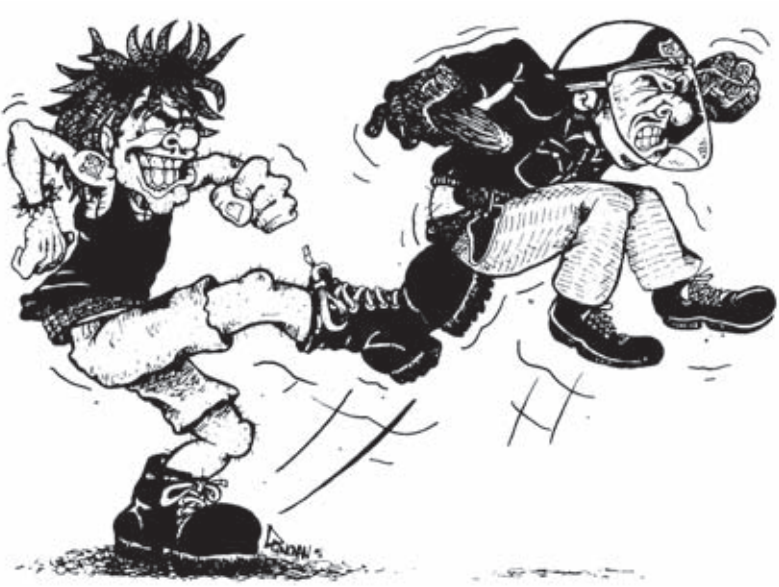
Making Punk A Threat Again—what? So those geezers with skanky t-shirts, mohicans and random blue bits on their faces lying pissed in the doorway of the 7-11 are supposed to be a threat to the state? Punk has always been subject to a wide range of misinterpretation, dismissal and abuse, but it's actually spawned the growth of a near-global culture of resistance, DIY-ethics and mutual support—all surprisingly thriving in 'Third World' countries with large youth populations. Punk doesn't seem to be such a big thing here in the UK as it is elsewhere—and I'm convinced that this is due to American 'zines and bands using the slogan 'Get Pissed' which means 'get angry' in the USA, but which could easily be misunderstood over here!

Recently available in the UK the book is a collection of random rants and informative pieces from the long running US punk magazine *Profane Existence* (PE). I have always been excited by this mag, which went way beyond the usual punk fanzine format of lots of band interviews, reviews and unreadable cut and paste layout. It included 'proper' articles on action and organisation, plus 'scene reports' from all over the world. Only in *Profane Existence* have I seen articles on Polish squats, Israeli anarchist federations and anarcho-punk gatherings in Uruguay.

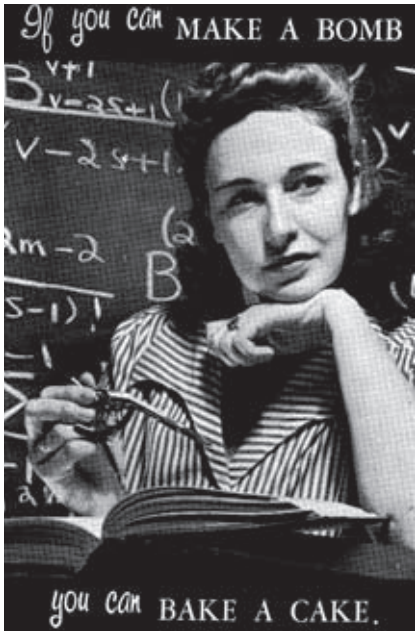
Profane Existence always put politics before puking so that's why this book is such a good read for not-just-punks. Rants on sexism and anti-fascism are personal, passionate and bring the issues home. Articles like 'Teach your fucking self' about self-education or 'Zinedom' inspire you to do something to improve your life. Reports from the LA riots or from *PE* projects such as the Emma Center—a social centre in Minneapolis—are analytical and interesting. Discussions about 'free speech for fascists' or women only spaces are thought provoking and there's lots of different ideas presented on anti-mass organising in collectives and federations, as well as experiences of them all.

And you get cool graphics, pictures, collages and cartoons throughout (I still think books without pictures are *boring*) plus a healthy injection of straightforward anger. "Anger is orgasmic. It makes you tremble, moan and shudder, and it feels *sooo* good to release it. Don't deny yourself an orgasm. The poverty of everyday existence is fucking you and loving it; fuck it back and love it more. Actualise your anger, bring it to life, use it to *smash*. Then, through clenched teeth, grin. Those fuckers will never have you." (p.67)

It's obvious I was extremely inspired by this collection so go see for yourself. It's available for £5.25 including postage (make cheques and Postal Orders payable to Active Distribution) and send them to: Active Distribution, BM Active, London, WC1N 3XX, UK. Unfortunately *PE* folded with its final issue in November 1998, Number 37—still available if you look around. Despite this the *PE* collective are continuing with similiar projects. Check out their website at: www.profaneexistence.com



From Knapping To Crapping
Running Riot Through The Supermarket Of Skills!



The monster of enclosure applies not just to land, but equally to knowledge. Every day we become increasingly dependant on specialists and experts—whether it be to produce our food, cure our illnesses or mend our tools. This division of labour is central to the maintenance of a hierarchical system where we are all alienated from ourselves, each other and the world around us. To continue, advance and intensify the domination of our lives these people jealously guard and mystify the skills they have. This creates a culture of dependence—one where we're scared to try and take control of our lives because we feel we don't have the knowledge necessary to do so. So, if we are ever to transcend this fucked system, part of what we need to do is to re-learn many of these skills that have been forgotten, destroyed or stolen from us.

To try and help this process along we have emptied our shelves, perused through dusty bookshops, and waded through various catalogues to compile this list of practical skills books and pamphlets. When using this list remember that *no* book is ever a replacement for practice and experience and reading a book listed here is *no*t intended to be a substitute for that. Many of the publications have a strong USA bias (particularly those in the *Blags and Scams*, *Things That Go Bang* and *Hacktivism* sections)—or, worse than this, some may contain out-of-date information. Despite this we have listed these when no other suitable UK or recently written alternative has been found. The inclusion of a book or pamphlet in this list does not mean we agree with the politics of its writer, editor or publisher—and it *doesn't* necessarily mean we suggest you try what is suggested in it.

Having said all this, the books below can hopefully act as a starting point for people who want to find out more about a particular skill or field of interest. We find the fact that there is this huge diversity of skills out there—as well as many more we haven't even touched upon—incredibly exciting, despite never having the desire nor ability to try our hand at all of them. Hopefully you'll find this section inspiring and informative—and we await your comments on it with glee! (The code in brackets after each review relates to a key at the end of the whole section. To find out where you can get a copy of the publication reviewed refer to this on page 324.)

Forward To The Paleolithic!

Earth Knack—Stone Age Skills For The Twentieth Century by B and R Blankenship (Peregrine Smith) ISBN 0-879-05733-5 Provides working details on how to acquire a whole raft of useful skills. Twist and plait strong rope from plant fibres, learn basic flint knapping, make natural dyes and clay pottery, light a fire using friction, weave baskets and loads more. Bring on the Millennium Bug! (ECO)

Indian Scout Craft and Lore by Charles A Eastman (Constable and Company) ISBN 0-486-22995-5 Written by a full blooded Sioux Native American this book (originally published in 1914) contains details of the authors training and experiences as a boy brought up in the traditional Sioux way. Although not that useful for learning skills from, it's worth reading for the insights it gives into Sioux life. (BK)

Outdoor Survival Skills by Larry Dean Olsen (Chicago Review Press) ISBN 1-55652-084-0 A revised and expanded edition of this excellent manual on primitive living skills. Has snippets of Native American influenced philosophy, as well as good advice on fire-lighting, water, gathering and preparing plants, shelter construction and hunting. (BK)



Ray Mears' World of Survival by Ray Mears and Jane Hunter (HarperCollins Publishers) ISBN 0-00-472083-0 A book published to accompany the recent BBC television series Tracks. Contains six sections with each one taking a look at the ways that indigenous people from around the world live in harmony with each other and nature. Includes sections on the !Kung San in Namibia, the Nuaula of Seram in Indonesia and the Evenk people of Siberia. Ray Mears also runs excellent—albeit expensive—courses. For details of these contact: Woodlore, 77 Dillingburgh Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 8LS, UK. Telephone: 01580 819608. (BK)

The SAS Survival Handbook by John Wiseman (William Collins and Sons) ISBN 0-00-217185-6 I remember buying my copy of this when I was about ten and petrified of nuclear war! Focusses on getting through short term survival situations and as such is unfortunately very orientated towards the military/survivalist market. Despite this it is to be recommended as it's full of good basic information. Also published as a pocket sized book by Collins. (BK)


Some Examples of Stone Tools

The Survival Handbook by Raymond Mears (Haynes Publishing) ISBN 1-85648-180-8 Comprehensively covers all types of primitive living skills. Clearly written and well illustrated with excellent photographs this book is the best available on the subject for the UK. Unfortunately out of print, although it is possible—and well worth it—to track it down via a library. (BK)

Tom Brown's Field Guide to Wilderness Survival by Tom Brown Jr with Brandt Morgan (Berkley Books) ISBN 0-425-10572-5 Tom is an incredible person. Brought up during the 1960s in the Pine Barrens, USA, he was close friends with one of the last surviving Apache Lipin Scouts. This book—only one in a series—is crammed full of information, stories and diagrams explaining the skills that he's learnt over the years. Tom also runs courses—for details of these contact: The Tracker Inc., PO Box 173, Ashbury, NJ 08802, USA. (BK)

Self Defence

When learning self defence it's important that books should only be used as a starting point or complimentary aid to training—*not* a replacement for it. Although to become proficient in defending yourself takes years of practice, a few useful techniques can be picked up fairly quickly. We reckon that it is best to use the books below to get a feel for a particular style that appeals to you and then, if you want to learn it to any level of competence, find a good school and start attending—regulary!

A Dictionary of the Martial Arts by Louis Frederic (Athlone Press) ISBN 0-485-12080-1 A reference guide to the technical and historical aspects of all the martial arts. Line drawings illustrate hundreds of techniques, cross references show the relationships between different styles and entries give summaries of all the different arts. (BK)

Free to Fight—An Interactive Self Defence Project (Candy Ass Records) Double LP and Booklet A benefit record with stories and sound advice on feminist self defence. Intended for use by women and girls only it's an encouraging read—and good music too! For a copy check out a good record store or contact: Candy Ass Records, PO Box 42382, 97242, Portland, Oregon, USA.

Kung Fu—Tae Kwondo, Tai Chi, Kendo, Iaido and Shinto Ryu by Fay Goodman (Hermes House) ISBN 1-84038-203-1 A guide to the most popular martial arts, with clear step-by-step techniques and specialist advice, over 300 colour photos demonstrating moves, and explainations of the underlying philosophy of each art. (BK)

Martial Arts for Beginners by Ron Sieh (Writers and Readers) ISBN 0-86316-171-5 Not a 'how to' book exactly, but probably the best available introduction to, and overview of, the martial arts. Covers the history of the fighting arts, distinguishes between them and has some recommendations for people who are thinking of taking one up. (BK)

The Martial Arts Encyclopedia by Jennifer Lawler (Masters Press) ISBN 1-57028-068-1 The most comprehensive reference guide to the martial arts. Serves as a good resource for those who wish to find out more about all the different styles. (BK)

Martial Arts For Women—A Practical Guide by Jennifer Lawler (Turtle Press) ISBN 1880336162 A reference for women interested in the martial arts.



Plenty of 'how-to' information on topics like conditioning, kicking, striking, self defence, sparring and injury prevention. (BK)

Three Second Fighter—The Sniper Option by Geoff Thompson (Summersdale) ISBN 1-873475-66-7 The majority of fights last less than 3 seconds. This book trains you to read the body language and ritual of attack and so learn to stop your attacker in their tracks by using a physical and psychological 'fence' or a 'shooting' attack. (BK)

Health And Fitness

The Handbook of Swimming by David Wilkie and Kelvin Juba (Pelham Books) ISBN 0-7207-2061-3 A fully revised edition this practical manual includes learning to swim, techniques, nutrition and mentality. Fully illustrated with photographs and illustrations throughout. (BK)

Fitness for Dummies edited by Suzanne Schlesberg (IDG Books) ISBN 1-56884-866-8 An essential 'get fit' reference covering fitness in a practical and fun way. Provides tips, techniques and suggestions for a healthy life. (BK)

The Stone Age Health Programme—Diet and Exercise as Nature Intended by S Boyd Eaton, M Shostak and M Konner (Angus and Robertson Publishers) ISBN 0-207-16264-6 Half diet book and half exercise guide, this book argues that we have evolved to live a Paleolithic lifestyle and that nearly all our ills today come from straying from this path. Gives recommendations on how we can return to our healthy roots with a Paleolithic diet and exercise programme. (BK)

Survival of the Fittest—Understanding Health and Peak Physical Performance by Mike Stroud (Vintage) ISBN 0-09-927259-8 The author, a participant of extreme physical challenges, sets out the diet, exercise and genetic factors that enable humans to perform at their peak. Analyses feats of survival and athletic prowess that illustrate the way the body functions at its best. Also has tips on how to get, and stay, fit. (BK)

Triathlon Training by Dave Scott (Simon & Schuster) ISBN 0-671-60473-2 Triathlon competitions involve swimming, cycling and running and their participants are generally regarded as the best at all-round fitness. This book covers the physiology of the body, has individual chapters on each discipline, workout schedules and suggestions for suitable diets. Useful, and not just for people planning to enter a triathlon! (BK)

Stretching—Exercises For Everyday Fitness by Bob Anderson (Pelham Books) ISBN 0-7207-1351-X Stretching keeps the muscles flexible and ready, improves performance, helps prevent injury and makes you feel good. This book has over 1000 drawings and clear instructions to help you stretch effectively. (BK)

First Aid And Medical

The Anarchist AIDS Medical Formulary—A Guide to Guerrilla Immunology by Charles R Caulfield with Billi Goldberg (North Atlantic Books) ISBN 1-55643-175-9 Caulfield was diagnosed HIV positive in January 1994 and has since dedicated his life to telling people the alternative AIDS therapies that have been suppressed by the medical establishment. This book mentions all of them—from DNCB and Vitamin A through to Chinese medicine and antioxidants. A resources section at the end lists useful organisations and further information. For more details on alternative treatments to HIV/AIDS contact Bodypositive on: 01273 6932266. (BK)

Beyond Antibiotics—50 (or So) Ways to Boost Immunity and Avoid Antibiotics by Michael A Schmidt and others (North Atlantic Books) ISBN 1-55643-180-5 Everybody agrees that antibiotics are crap, so here are loads of ideas for getting by without them. Includes sections on food and nutrition, sleep, smoking, herbs and vitamins. Also offers fourteen alternative treatments for common ailments that are often treated by antibiotics. (BK)

Cancer Therapy—The Independent Consumer's Guide to Non-Toxic Treatment and Prevention by Ralph W Moss (Equinox Press) ISBN 1-88102506-3 This thick guide reports on 80 unorthodox cancer treatments and has nearly 1000 references from medical journals to back up its claims. (BK)

Ditch Medicine—Advanced Field Procedures for Emergencies by Hugh L Coffee (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-717-3 How to deal with traumatic injuries that occur in wilderness settings where there is no chance of an evacuation. Provides step-by-step instructions, real life examples and photos on dealing with infected wounds, small wound repair, pain control, treatment of burns and more. (PAL)



First Aid by Dr RM Youngson with The Diagram Group (HarperCollins) ISBN 0-00-4701208 Small pocket sized manual that covers all basic first aid techniques and skills. Well illustrated and explained—this is a book worth getting and keeping with your first aid kit. (BK)

First Aid Manual—Emergency Procedures for Everyone at Home, at Work or at Leisure The Authorised Manual of St. John Ambulance, St. Andrew's Ambulance Association and The British Red Cross Society (Dorling Kindersley) ISBN 0-86318-230-5 Comprehensive clear guide to every type of medical emergency. Includes the principles of first aid, basic resuscitation techniques and a well illustrated guide to dealing with specific injuries. Don't wait until you need this book to save a life—do a first aid course now! For details of your local one contact St. John Ambulance on: 0171 235 5231. (BK)

Helping The Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse—For Friends, Families and Lovers by Kathe Starke (Mother Courage Press) ISBN 0-94130-026-9 A meaningful and thought provoking account of childhood sexual abuse. This book aims to help friends of survivors understand the behaviour of victims, and so aid them on the recovery process. (AK)

Medical Handbook for Walkers and Climbers by Peter Steele (Constable) ISBN 0-09-478210-5 Provides first aid information to cover all eventualities. Suggests equipment and drugs to carry and describes various conditions and how to treat them, from the minor—nosebleeds and blisters, to the major—hypothermia, fractures and pulmonary oedema. (BK)

Natural Pregnancy by Janet Balaskas (Gaia Books) ISBN 1-85-67002-7 Practical well-being guide to pregnancy—from conception through to birth. (BK)

Our Bodies Ourselves—A Health Book By And For Women by Angela Phillips and Jill Rakusen (Penguin) ISBN 0-14-004430-2 A classic women's health book covering a wide range of issues, from physiology and sexuality through to violence against women, common women's health problems and the menopause. Also lots of information on both preventing, and having, babies. (BK)

Seeing Without Glasses—Improving Your Vision Naturally by Dr Robert Michael Kaplan (Beyond Words Publishing) ISBN 0-941831-97-3 According to this book weak eyesight and other problems related to your eyes can be corrected using natural, inexpensive methods—exercises, nutrition and attitude adjustment. Details all of these and has information on clinical studies to prove the point. (BK)

US Army Special Forces Medical Handbook by Glen K Craig (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364454-9 A quick reference guide to disease diagnosis and treatment, drugs and dosages, emergency paramedic skills, and preventative medicine. Special sections on nuclear injuries, biological and chemical warfare and emergency surgery! (PAL)

Herbalism

When using the books listed below be certain that you are positive with the identification of any herbs that you intend to use. The best way of learning is to be competent in the use of a flora guide. Alternatively, or ideally as well, go on a walk with somebody who can show you which herbs are which. Also bear in mind the ecological impact of 'wildcrafting', as collecting from the wild is known. It should only be done if there are loads of the plant in that area, although even if there are, you should avoid picking the whole plant. If using herbs medicinally, make sure it is for minor ailments or first aid only. For anything more serious (i.e: that lasts for a few days) it is recommended that you see somebody more knowledgeable. Learn respect for herbs.

The Complete New Herbal edited by Richard Mabey (Penguin) ISBN 0-14-012682-1 A good all-round introduction to herbs and their uses—not just medicinal, but as dyes, in cooking and beauty. Also has ideas on how to grow them. Not good for identification in the wild though. (BK)

The Encyclopaedia of Medicinal Plants by Andrew Chevallier (Dorling Kindersley) ISBN 0-7513-0314 This looks a bit of a coffee table book as it's very glossy, but is actually quite useful. Good large format herbal, which covers most herbs used, including some Indian and Chinese ones. Main herbs have a whole page description; whilst others are covered in less detail. Lovely pictures. (BK)

Herb Craft—A Guide to the Shamanic and Ritual Use of Herbs by S Lavender and A Franklin (Capall Bann) ISBN 1-898307-57-9 Don't let the



title mislead you, or put you off. There is some stuff about ritual use, but this book is good for the folklore and such like information. No pictures, but good descriptions of the herbs—as well as some interesting recipes. (BK)

Herbal Remedies by Christopher Hedley and Non Shaw (Paragon) ISBN 0-7525-2148-9 Wonderful book on how to actually make your own remedies—including creams, tinctures, and even cider vinegar. Good pictures and easy to follow instructions. Has small section at the end about some of the most useful herbs to have in the house for first aid. (BK)

Hygieia—A Women's Herbal by Jeannine Parvati (Freestone) ISBN 0-913512-54-0 Gorgeous book made with love. Focuses on women only—dealing with periods, fertility and childbirth. Drawback is that it is written by an American and mainly covers US herbs. All women interested in herbs should read this. (BK)

The Wild Flowers of Britain and Northern Europe (Collins) ISBN 0-00219069-9 A portable, excellent flora to help identify plants in the wild. Easy to use flower key. A must for those who want to know their plants! (BK)

A Women's Book of Herbs by Elisabeth Brooke (The Women's Press) ISBN 0-7043-4296-0 Interesting for giving the astrological references for the herbs she writes about, following Culpepper and that English tradition. Focuses only on women, but is noted for giving the emotional aspects of the herbs along with the medicinal. Very useful. (BK)

Blags And Scams

The Complete Book of International Smuggling by MC Finn (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-268-6 Smuggling is easy money for tourists or professional crims alike. This book covers which goods sell where, avoiding trouble, what customs officers look for and how drugs are smuggled. (LP)

Dowsing—One Man's Way by J Scott Elliot (Unknown) No ISBN I ain't no bleeding hippy but even water and oil companies are taking this seriously now. This book is the result of 20 years experience in practical dowsing. Covers tools, their use and also gives examples of the potential for dowsing. (ECO)

Duty Free—Smuggling Made Easy by Michael Connor (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-264-3 This book gives you some ideas, both simple and complex, on how to conceal contraband from customs. (BK)

Free Stuff—How Others Get Free Money, Booze, Gasoline and Everything by John Green (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-657-6 Find out how others are scrounging everything from cars and clothes to medical care and money. Shows schemes—from the simple to the complex—telling you how to get free travel, film tickets, postage, haircuts, insurance and more. (PAL)

The Last Frontiers on Earth—Strange Places Where You Can Live Free by Jon Fisher (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 0-91517-924-5 Takes you to the many strange places where the author reckons you can live for nothing. Includes; Antartica, The Arctic Icecap, floating icebergs, ocean platforms, living as a nomad, underwater habitats, airships and underground hideaways. (LP)

S(H)elf Help Guide—The Smart Lifter's Handbook by Gabriel Caime and Gabriel Ghone (Trix Publishing) ISBN 0-9680761-0-6 The first part of the book covers the morals and motives of shoplifters, retailers and the authors themselves. Then goes on to extensive chapters on how to actually steal stuff from stores—with over 40 different approaches to try. The last chapter deals with the security devices designed to thwart shoplifters and then tells you how to get around them. This book may be the last thing you buy! (BK)

The Vegetable Liberation Front (Self Published) No ISBN A publication from the VLF who seek to liberate the captive foods from shops—supermarket and 'right-on' organic outlets alike. Much of this publication describes their technique for brazenly walking into stores and freeing the produce. Also has tales of train hopping, a bicycle parts library and building a makeshift house in the woods. For a copy send some dollars to: 3124 Shattuck Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94705, USA.

Mulching Felicity Kendal

Backyard Composting by John Roulac (Green Earth Books) ISBN 1-900322-04-8 Covers composting at home to conserve water, reduce rubbish, enrich the soil, replace toxic fertilisers and have fun! Also mentions the various types of composting bins and accessories and gives instructions for constructing your own from scrap materials. (PP)



Fertile Waste—Managing Your Domestic Sewage by P Harper (Centre for Alternative Technology) ISBN 1-898049-02-5 Treat your own sewage and use it for plant feeding! The nature of sewage, health and safety, making a compost toilet, managing septic tanks and more are all covered in here. (CAT)

The Humanure Handbook—A Guide to Composting Human Manure by Joseph C Jenkins (Jenkins Publishing) ISBN 0-9644258-4-X Written by an organic gardener this book has details about both basic and complex methods of dealing with human excrement. Uses plenty of photos, humour, cartoons, and tables to show how we should be using our shit for more productive ends rather than just polluting the seas, lakes and rivers. (CAT)

How to Shit in the Woods by Kathleen Meyer (Ten Speed Press) ISBN 0-89815-627-0 A collection of techniques to assist wilderness freaks to acquire the skills of shitting away from civilisation. Has sections on Digging a Hole, When You Can't Dig a Hole and Trekkers Trots. (CAT)

Sewage Solutions—Answering the Call of Nature by N Grant, M Moodie and C Weedon (Center for Alternative Technology) ISBN 1-898049-13-0 Whether you are connected to the mains or not, this book will help you make the right choices for small scale sewage treatment. Has sections on household water flow, compost toilets, cesspits, solar ponds and collecting waste water. (CAT)

Things That Go Bang

A special warning for some of the books in this section. Dabbling with this stuff usually translates into serious trouble—and not just from the heavily armed anti-terrorist cops when they smash their way into your house at 3 o'clock in the morning.

In addition to those killed outright there are a number of people walking around today that are missing an eye, or have one or two fingers less than they'd like, due to their experiments with home-made guns and explosives.

As well as kids who have read too many survivalist magazines, they include well trained experts with decades of experience behind them. The things discussed in these books are by their very nature highly unpredictable and potentially lethal. If you must learn about them don't rely on a book for anything but a *very* basic theoretical understanding.

The Anarchist Cookbook by William Powell (Barricade Books) ISBN 0-9623032-0-8 Has to be mentioned really, although only to warn people not to go anywhere near it. Contains mad, bad, flawed and potentially lethal descriptions of making drugs, guns, explosives and booby-traps. Conspiracy theories abound about this book—with some reckoning the CIA wrote it to help kill us all off! You have been warned. (PAL)

The Art of the Rifle by Jeff Cooper (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-931-1 Here Jeff Cooper—the foremost firearms instructor in the USA—tells you everything you need to know about shooting the rifle, whether it be for hunting, target shooting or combat. A classic amongst shooters apparently. (PAL)

Blowguns—The Breath of Death by Michael D Janich (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87346-707-7 Not *bang* so much as *fffff*. Covers purchasing a modern blowgun, making you own, how to shoot them, devising targets, maintenance and storage. (LP)

Boomerangs—How to Make and Throw Them by Bernard S Mason (Dover Publications) ISBN 0-48623-028-7 This is a cool book! Be like the feral kid in Mad Max 2 by and learn how to build and fly Cross-stick, Pin-wheel, Boomabirds, Tumblesticks and more! (CAT)

Breath of the Dragon—Homebuilt Flamethrowers by Ragnar Benson (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-565-0 According to this book flamethrowers are powerful, cheap and easy to build and operate. Includes easy-to-follow instructions to help you construct your own customised flamethrower. Also has plans for backpack and vehicle mounted designs. (PAL)

David's Tool Kit—A Citizens' Guide to Taking Out Big Brother's Heavy Weaponry by Ragnar Benson (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-143-X Ragnar brings together many of his unusual interests here in a guide for getting rid of Goliath's tanks, helicopters, trucks, jeeps and other heavy vehicles and weapons. This book will teach you to make molotov cocktails, thermite grenades, explosives and much, much more. (LP)

A Do-It-Yourself Submachine Gun—It's Homemade, 9mm, Lightweight and Durable by Gerard Metral (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-840-4 An illustrated step-by-step guide to construct-



ing your very own 9mm selective fire blowback submachine gun. (PAL)

Guerrilla's Arsenal—Advanced Techniques for Making Explosives and Time Delay Bombs by David Harper (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-7556 A complete primer on making explosives from scratch and then using them. Describes the equipment, safety procedures and techniques for construction as well as having anecdotes from the IRA and the USA Underground in the 70s. (PAL)

Homemade Ammo—How to Make It, How to Reload It and How to Cache It by Duncan Long (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-816-1 Now having made your submachine gun you need some bullets. Here is the book that tells you—with a little help from some basic tools—how to make them. Includes all the technical details needed. (PAL)

Improvised Munitions Black Book Volumes One, Two and Three (Paladin Press) No ISBN Originally published as US military manuals these were aimed at increasing the potential of special forces and guerrilla troops in resisting the Soviet invasion. Has instruction in the art of manufacturing explosives from easily available materials with sections on the construction of detonators, shaped charges, delays, switches and incendiaries. (PAL)

Professional Boobytraps—Special Devices and Techniques by Seymour Lecker (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-699-1 Gives an overview of boobytraps used by today's armies. Written in non-technical, easy to follow language with more than 100 illustrations on how to build, obtain, set and detect boobytraps. (PAL)

Rolling Thunder—Turning Junk into Automobile Weaponry by Ryan K Kephart (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-667-3 Mad Max eat your heart out! Learn how to arm your car for self defence on the road. Has plans for smoke screens, oil slicks and an electric shock seatbelt. (PAL)

The Sling for Sport and Survival by Cliff Savage (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 0-91517-919-9 Doesn't go bang but what other section could it go in? Everything you wanted to know about every window smashers favourite—the catapult or sling. Has details on construction, usage and ammunition—everything from stones to molotovs! (PAL)

Zips, Pipes and Pens—Arsenal of Improvised Weapons by J David Trilby (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-702-5 Using examples from prisons, the 'Third World' and police departments the author demonstrates a wide variety of improvised firearms—including their construction and usage. (PAL)

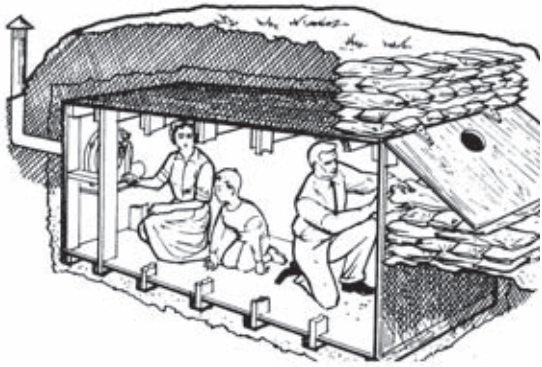
Home Sweet Home

Build it with Bales—A Step-by-Step Guide to Straw Bale Construction by Mattas Myrhrman and SO MacDonald (Chelsea Green) ISBN 0-9642821-1-9 A clear, illustrated, logical guide to the entire process of designing and building your straw bale house. Now take up smoking! (PP)

Build Your Own Yurt—A Complete Guide To Making A Mongolian Ger by PR King (Self Published) ISBN 09531763-0-4 If you thought living under canvas had to be damp and miserable you should see some of the Gers this bloke has made. Recommended if you want a to build a gorgeous ger or yummy yurt. (BK)

The Cob Builders Handbook—You Can Hand Sculpt Your Own Home by Becky Bee (Green Earth Books) ISBN 0-9659082-0-8 A third of the world's population live in homes made from cob—unbaked earth. It does not require great experience to build, is ecologically sound, comfortable and long lasting. Has chapters on design, site selection, materials, foundations, floors, windows and doors, roofs and construction. (PP)

Diggers and Dreamers—The Guide to Communal Living 98/99 edited by Jonathan How (Diggers and Dreamers Publications) ISBN 0-951494-54-6 Lots of articles, contacts and advice on [the nightmare of] living collectively. Has practical advice on





setting up a communal household and contains 80 UK and some 400 international contacts. (CAT)

Handmade Houseboats by R Conder (International Marine Publications) ISBN 0-07158-022-0 Though an American book almost all of the ideas here are applicable to UK narrowboats. Good source of ideas and techniques and loads of practical information. (ECO)

Home Tree Home—Principles of Tree House Construction by P Nelson and G Hadden (Penguin) ISBN 0-14625-998-8 And they mean tree *houses*—windows, roofs and everything. Good practical hints, plans, examples, line drawings and colour photos. A must for anyone with access to a large tree, a saw and a box of nails—even covers how to tie knots in your safety line. (ECO)

How to Set up a Housing Co-operative by Radical Routes (Self Published) No ISBN Fuck off your landlord—set up a housing co-op. This covers exactly what a housing co-op is, formalities and structures, raising money and other options if a housing co-op is not for you. Includes a list of useful contacts and further reading. Order a copy for £5 (including postage) from: Radical Routes, c/o Cornerstone Resource Centre, 16 Sholebroke Avenue, Chapeltown, Leeds, LS7 3HB, UK.

Ideal Home—Survival Edition (Suspect/Hooligan Press) ISBN 1-869802-01-2 Probably long out of print (although try Freedom Bookshop in London as they may have a few copies left) but still a cool anarcho/DIY book. Has sections on squatting buildings, land squats, benders and canal boat living. All interspersed with graphics and extra snippets of information in a wild cut and paste type way. (BK)

The Self Build Book—How To Enjoy Designing And Building Your Own Home by Jon Broome and Brian Richardson (Green Earth Books) ISBN 1-900322-00-5 The definitive guide to the whole process of planning and constructing your home. Has loads of examples from successful projects. (CAT)

Shelter (Shelter Publications/Random House) ISBN 0-679-76948-X First published in 1973 this 176 A3 page book is still the best overview of traditional and ecological housing worldwide. It's packed with over a thousand beautiful pictures of domes, tents, barns, cave dwellings, huts, yurts and treehouses. Includes useful building tips and design ideas. Guaranteed to get your imagination and excitement levels racing! (BK)

Sod It—An Introduction to Earth Sheltered Development In England and Wales by P Carpenter (Coventry University Press) ISBN 0-905-94928-5 Has a good general introduction to all the topics relating to earth construction. As well as this it has examples from actual projects and realistic approaches for planning an earth dwelling. (ECO)

Squatters Handbook by the Advisory Service for Squatters (Self Published) ISBN 0-9507769-3-9 Everything you need to know about the basics of squatting buildings in the UK. Has chapters on the legal aspects (including post-Criminal Justice Act), finding a place, moving in, repairs, evictions and a useful resource guide at the end. For a copy send £1.50 to: ASS, 2 St. Pauls's Road, London, N1, UK.

General Mayhem And Mischief

DIY Tunnelling by Anonymous (Self Published) No ISBN A good pamphlet that covers all aspects of using tunnelling as a tactic to delay the eviction of direct action camps. Has sections on; the basics, shoring up, lighting, air, doors, lock-ons, concrete, fortification, living underground and the eviction. For a copy check the web at: www.sol.co.uk/d/diffusion/cornerstone/crc

Earth First! Direct Action Manual—Uncompromising Non-violent Resistance in Defense of Mother Earth! (Self Published) No ISBN A US EF! production full of direct action skills. Heavy focus on blockades, lock-ons, tripods and other similar tactics. Also has information on legal situation (USA specific though), hunt sabbing and small bits on pre-action preparation, first aid and spaces for notes—although this strikes me as a security no-no. For a copy send around $10 to: DAM Collective, c/o SWEF! PO Box 10384, Eugene, Oregon 97440, USA or order from the *Earth First! Journal*—see contacts on page 335.

Ecodefense—A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching edited by Dave Foreman and Bill Haywood (Abbzug Press) ISBN 0-9637751-0-3 Largely the book that US Earth First! had its reputation built upon in the 1980s. Has sections on stopping developments, tree spiking, disabling vehicles and heavy equipment, animal defence, miscellaneous devilry and propaganda. Get the Third Edition that has a special enlarged post-Dave Foreman bust section on security—as well as an epilogue on how to sink ships! All very US-centric, but great fun anyway. For more useful UK advice see *Osymandias* below. (BK)



Fighting Back on the Job by Victor Santoro (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 0-91517-9-11-3 Your boss can ruin your life—but remember you can ruin their life and their business! 101 ways of doing that are included in this book. (AK)

A Gardeners Guide for Survival in the Modern World! by Anonymous (Self Published) No ISBN A straight-forward guide to trashing genetic crops. Covers preparation, appropriate clothing, equipment, finding and identifying your crop—and then what to do with it. Hunt around for a copy of this, track down your local test site—and then get digging!

Roger's Profanisaurus by Roger Mellie (Fulchester University Press) ISBN 1-902212-05-3 A new expanded edition of the entertaining/highly offensive glossary of vulgarity, expletives, colourful obsenity and sexual euphemisms. Never be unsure about what the 'Bologna bop' or an 'attack of the helicopters' are again. (BK)

Sabotage in the American Workplace—Anecdotes of Dissatisfaction, Mischief and Revenge edited by Martin Sprouse (Pressure Drop Press) ISBN 0-9627091-3-1 Divided into sections according to work category, there are 133 stories of worker mischief making here. Ranging from thieving, slow downs and pranks through to outright sabotage these stories make for an inspiring, thought provoking and funny book. (AK)

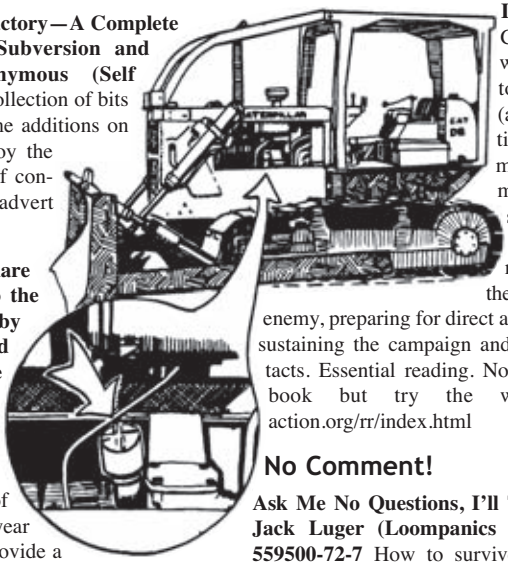
Smashing The Image Factory—A Complete Manual of Billboard Subversion and Destruction by Anonymous (Self Published) No ISBN A collection of bits from *Ecodefence* and some additions on how to deface and destroy the brain washing weapons of control and consumption—advert hoardings. (BK)

Squaring up to the Square Mile—A rough guide to the City of London by Corporate Watch and London Reclaim The Streets (J18 Publications) No ISBN Excellent, clearly written pamphlet produced in the run-up to the Global Day of Action on June 18th this year (see page 1). It aims to provide a basic overview of how the City of London works, and so help us fuck it up—information for action at its best! For a copy send £1.00 (including postage) to: J18 Info, Box E, 111 Magdelen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RQ, UK.

Osymandias Sabotage Skills Handbook Volumes One and Two by Anonymous—First Edition, 1995 (Self Published) Excellent—the best UK guide to ecotage so far. Obviously written by someone that knows their stuff, it has so far been published in two volumes. The first contains really good basic information on planning a hit, security, tools and methods of sabotage. The second covers more technical stuff including incendiaries. For a copy see the website at: http://cafeunderground.com/Cafesite/Rooms/Ozymandia/sabotage_index.html

Out of Business—Force a Company, Business, or Store to Close its Doors…for good! by Dennis Fiery (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-190-1 Whether you are looking to cripple an international conglomerate or shut down a small family run business you'll find all the techniques you need to do so in this book. For more ideas on fun and frolics at work check out the *How to Fire Your Boss—A Workers Guide to Direct Action* website at: www.au.iww.org/labor/direct_action/title.html (LP)

Road Raging—Top Tips for Wrecking Roadbuilding by Road Alert! (Self Published) ISBN 0-9531-852-06 Comprehensive, clearly written excellent guide to stopping roads (although the information is also applicable to most other developments). Covers all stages of setting up a campaign, legal information, dealing with the media, knowing your enemy, preparing for direct action, offensive action, sustaining the campaign and pages of useful contacts. Essential reading. No longer available as a book but try the web at: www.eco-action.org/rr/index.html

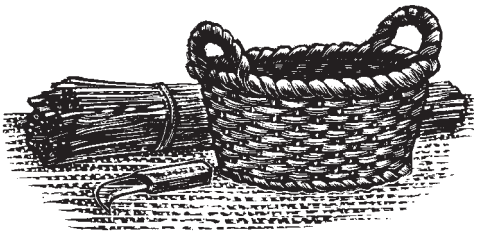


No Comment!

Ask Me No Questions, I'll Tell You No Lies! by Jack Luger (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-559500-72-7 How to survive 'being interrogated,

interviewed, quizzed, grilled or sweated' this is a manual for those wishing to avoid giving anything away—including in lie detector tests! (AK)

Dirty Tricks Cops Use by Bart Rommel (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-559501-01-4 A guidebook to the sly and aggressive tricks that the US police use to disrupt the lives of people and demoralise potential criminals. (LP)



Interrogation—Techniques and Tricks to Secure Evidence (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-625-8 A US police manual used to train interrogators. Details the methods they use to squeeze information out of us and includes techniques used by the Chinese and Soviets (and the USA and UK no doubt) during The Cold War. (PAL)

No Comment—The Defendant's Guide to Arrest (with added Criminal Justice Act Information!) by London Anarchist Black Cross (Self Published) No ISBN Excellent guide to getting nicked in the UK and what is likely to happen when you do. Clearly explains what you are obliged to do when arrested and your rights, as well as giving examples of how the cops try and get you to answer questions and incriminate yourself. Essential knowledge for anyone reading this. Free copies are available from *London ABC*—see page 290 for address.

Without a Trace—To Live Outside the Law You Have to be Honest by Moriarty (Self Published) No ISBN Intended to try and even the balance between us and the police, this is a practical guide to fingerprints, forensics, phone tapping and video surveillance. Includes a section (slightly dated) on how the police operate—including their communication systems. Also has an interesting interview with a person involved in animal liberation that has details of how they planned and executed a raid on a vivisection lab. Hard to get hold of—but essential reading if doing anything dodgy. (BK)

Craft

Basic Blacksmithing—An Introduction to Tool Making by David Harries and Bernhard Heer (Intermediate Technology) ISBN 1-85-33995-6 With only an anvil, a pair of bellows and a few basic tools, you can make almost all the tools you need to set up your own forge. Included here are tool making techniques, raw materials and a section on making metal parts for carpentry. (PP)

Beginners Guide to Candlemaking by David Constable (Search Press) ISBN 0-855-328-32-0 Features many techniques for making ornate and ornamental candles, as well as ordinary lighting candles. Comprehensive and illustrated with photos and drawings—everything you wanted to know about candlemaking. (PP)

The Craft of Natural Dyeing by Jenny Dean (Arthur Schwartz and Company) ISBN 0-85532-744-8 Practical handbook of all the wonderful natural products that can be used to dye material. Shows you how to dye at home using simple equipment. (ECO)

The Complete Book of Self-Sufficency by John Seymour (Corgi Books) ISBN 0-552-98051-X Has yet to be beaten as a general introduction to the topic. A huge amount of information from the acknowledged expert. (BK)

The Forgotten Arts—A practical guide to traditional skills by John Seymour (Collins, Angus and Robertson) ISBN 0-207-15007-9 A guide to woodland, building, field and workshops crafts. Also includes a good section on textiles and homecrafts such as making linen, silk, dyeing and candle making. (BK)

Green Woodworking—Working with Wood the Natural Way by M Abbott (Guild of Master Craftsmen) ISBN 0-94681-918-1 A step-by-step guide that takes you through the background, preparation and practice of green woodworking. Learn how to build your own pole lathe and avoid the nightmare of machinery. (ECO)

Handmade Baskets by Susie Vaughan (Search Press) ISBN 0-855-327-55-3 A guide to making baskets from the traditional materials found in the garden or hedgerow. (PP)

The Nature and Subsequent Uses of Flint—The Basics Of Lithic Technology Volume 1 by John W Lord (Self Published) ISBN 0-9521356-0-4 A cool little book for all us *real* luddites. Aimed at teaching



people the basics of knapping—the art of shaping flint for tools. Has all you need to know to start you off creating your own knives, arrowheads and more. Down with technology—up with tools! (BK)

Thatching—A handbook by Nicolas Hall (Intermediate Technology) ISBN 1-85339-060-7 A guide to using natural resources to achieve good quality thatching. How to get the longest possible roof life and minimise fire risk. Lots of drawings and clear text. (PP)

Traditional Woodland Crafts by R Tabor (BT Batsford Ltd.) ISBN 0-71347-500-5 The best of the few books on the topic of woodland crafts. Chapters on raw materials, the tools of the trade and lists the major woodland products together with details on how to make them. (ECO)

Travel

Be There Now (Self Published) No ISBN How to set money aside and take time off for budget travelling. Ways of saving money in earnest, frugal packing and mistakes to avoid. For a copy of this fanzine send $3 (including postage) to: PO Box 441993, Somerville, MA 02144-1993, USA.

Big World (Self Published) No ISBN A fanzine of inspirational travel-on-the-cheap stories and armchair adventures. Writing about solo bike treks through Patagonia, the use of Khat in the Yemen and busking techniques for Europe. Helpful section on finding cheap airfares and hostels around the world. For a 6 issue subscription send $15 to: PO Box 8743-C, Lancaster, PA 17604, USA. E-mail: bigworld@paonline.com

Cycle Repair—Step by Step by Rob van der Plas (Springfield Books Limited) ISBN 1-85688-027-3 Clear concise instructions, diagrams and colour photos make this a complete guide to keeping your bike in top working order. (BK)

Expat World (Self Published) No ISBN A magazine for 'international travellers, vagabonds, pirates and rakehells'. Has articles on useful loopholes and secrets for travellers, as well as how to get fake degrees—or even a driving license if you've failed your test. Three issue trial subscription is $50 from: Expat World, PO Box 1341, Raffles City, Singapore 9117. E-mail: eugenevl@singnet.com.sg

The Hitch-Hikers Handbook by James MacLaren (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-12-51 Everything you need to know about hitching. Covers what to wear, what to take, positioning yourself on the road, sign making and emergency sleeping. (AK)

Hitch-Hikers Manual—Britain by Simon Calder (Vacation Work) ISBN 0-907638-26-0 Advice and information for both the first time hitcher and the seasoned traveller. Has directions for hitching out of 200 towns and cities as well as maps of motorways with hitching ratings for every junction. Crams in techniques and gimmicks, the art of signwriting, legal problems, hitching lifts with boats and planes, CB radio and route planning. (BK)

Hobo Times—America's Journal of Wanderlust (National Hobo Association) No ISBN A magazine rather than a book—but a glossy full colour one devoted to the wild and free hobo life and their love of railroads and trains. Yearly subscriptions cost $21 for 6 issues. Send to: National Hobo Association, PO Box 706, Nisswa, MN 56468, USA.

Hopping Freight Trains in America by Duffy Littlejohn (Sand River Press) ISBN 0-944627-34 A guide to riding the rails covering what you need, the best times to do it and how to avoid getting caught by 'bulls'. Also discusses the pros and cons of different types of railcar. Has a heavy emphasis on safety throughout—in 1988 in the USA around 598 'railroad trespassers' were killed and 920 injured. (BK)

Infiltration (Self Published) No ISBN Cool fanzine dedicated to the passion of exploring places you're not supposed to go. Covers getting into hotels, caves, subway stations and hospitals to explore their hidden sides. For a copy send $2 to: Infiltration, PO Box 66069, Town Centre PO, Pickering, ON LIV 6P7, Canada.

The Mysteries of (H)I-(T)CHING (Godhaven Ink) No ISBN An little A6 pamphlet on the whys and hows of hitching lifts. Includes helpful hints on where to stand, signs and the law (it's legal). For a copy of this and more cool stuff send a stamp or two to: Godhaven Ink, PO Box HP94, Leeds, LS6 1YJ, UK.

Richards' Bicycle Repair Manual (Dorling Kindersly) ISBN 0-7513-0087-X Everything the average cyclist needs to keep their bike in peak condition. Good clear instructions for mountain and road bikes so even a mechanical disaster area like me can use this one. (BK)



Now You See Me…

In the UK alone around 250,000 people vanish every year. Although many re-appear a few days later a significant number are never seen again. Ever since I was a kid I have been excited by the idea of being able to create a new identity for myself and disappear. In this section there are some books that we hope may give a few tips on how to do so if needed. Also worth checking out for more up-to-date information (as when you really need it you don't want to fuck it up) is 'So you hate your life, too? Well it's easy to disappear from it.' in *The Observer Life Magazine* (18th August 1996).

Birth Certificate and Social Security Number Fraud by J Newman and T Sand (Index Publishing) ISBN 1-56866-105-3 This report examines the methods of getting a fake birth certificate and then using it to commit fraud. Includes a section on the tactics that institutions use to try and counter this. (PAL)

The Construction of Secret Hiding Places by Charles Robinson (Paladin Press) No ISBN Not strictly about false ID but how to hide things nonetheless. Want to hide cash, gold [fat chance], guns or drugs? This book details building secret stashes for all these and more—including one for a whole family! Also has instructions on building dummy furniture, false plumbing, hidden stairways and secret rooms. (PAL)

Getaway—Driving Techniques for Escape and Evasion by Ronald George Eriksen II (Paladin Press) No ISBN A disappearance of a different sort! A veteran high performance driver reveals everything you need to know about cornering, right angle turns, ramming procedures and dealing with blockades. Maybe I should learn to drive first though. (PAL)

The Get Out of Jail Free Book by Maxwell Hutchinson (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-559500-85-9 Starting with a history of escape attempts this book goes on to cover the tricks on escaping from—and then staying out of—prison. Has bits on weapons, diversions, breaking out and more. (AK)

How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found by Doug Richmond (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 0-915179-52-0 Heavy duty advice and tips on disappearing tactics for the people that need to know. (AK)

How to Start Your Own Country by Erwin S Strauss (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 0-915179-01-6 Failed in your attempts to disappear? Go to extremes the other way! This book tells you the story of dozens of new country projects including Sealand—where in 1966 Paddy Bates set up in an old WW2 anti-aircraft tower seven miles off the Essex coast. He then claimed independence and issued passports, money and stamps. After shooting at a boatload of passing workmen he was charged but the court ruled that they had no jurisdiction! Where is he now—anyone know? (LP)

The Real World of Alternate ID Acquisition by DP Rochelle (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-440-9 Tells you how to obtain the birth certificate of a dead person and from this single piece of ID you can build up a whole new identity. Has a lively personal account of how the author did this—learn from his mistakes though! (PAL)

Reborn Overseas—Identity Building in Europe, Australia and New Zealand by Trent Sands (Paladin Press) No ISBN Written from a USA perspective this book tells you how to build up a paper identity in the countries listed. (PAL)

Espionage/Research

Corporate Watch Address Book by Corporate Watch (Self Published) No ISBN One of the best and most fun publications ever produced! Has well researched listings of names and home addresses for hundreds of company heads, directors and high ranking employees. Methinks they be getting rather more British Rail penalty fares than they usually do. Order a copy for £2.00 from: Corporate Watch, c/o Box G, 111 Magdalen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RQ, UK.

The Industrial Espionage Handbook by Hugo Cornwall (Random Century) ISBN 0-71263634-X Covers overt and covert methods of intelligence gathering, the types of information available, computer hacking, how to research a company, State intelligence agencies and counter-measures taken by industry. A basic introduction and worth reading as a primer. (BK)

The Whole Spy Catalogue—A Resource Encyclopedia for Researchers, PIs, Spies and Generally Nosy People by Lee Lapin (Intelligence Incorporated) ISBN 1-880231-10-7 A whole range of things are covered in here; with ways of locating individuals, tapping phones, bugging rooms, breaking and entering and following people amongst



them. Tells you how to get hold of a person's address, phone number, financial details, employment records and anything else you may want to know about them! Company directors better watch out! (BK)

Hacktivism

The really effective techniques for computer 'crime' are unlikely to be found in these, or any other, books. Banks, corporations and other institutions often quietly cover-up breaches of their security so as to not create panic in their customers or provoke a wave of copycat offences. Use these books to familiarise yourself with the background and history, but they are no substitute for a 12 year old square-eyed coffee-fuelled geek from Winton who actually knows what they're doing. Onwards and upwards for HGF-56 and the Mad Hactivist!

Alternative Inphormation Consumer Survival Catalogue (Self Published) No ISBN A short catalogue whose areas of expertise are phone phreaking (using computers to scam free calls) and hacking. It includes chapters on reversing utility meters, listening in on cellular phones, writing viruses and beating lie detectors. For a copy send $3 (including postage) to: PO Box 4, Carthage, TX 75633-0004, USA.

2600—The Hacker Quarterly (Self Published) ISSN 0749-3851 The most professional and widely distributed zine on hacking and related topics. Covers subjects such as cryptography, radio telephones, French phone smartcards and instructions for defeating Windows 95. Always has a cool and interesting letters section. Order it for $7 (including postage) from: 2600 Enterprises, PO Box 752, Middle Island, NY 11953-0752, USA. E-mail: 2600@2600.com

The No-Nonsense Computer Virus and Hacking Resource Book (Catalogue) No ISBN Offers a good selection of books, magazines and software related to hacking, viruses and encryption. Amidst the other useful tat it sells a CD-ROM with 3700 active viruses on it! For a copy send $2 (including postage) to: American Eagle Publications, PO Box 1507, Show Low, AZ 85901, USA. Use false name and a care of address when ordering.

Root Zine (Self Published) No ISBN A fascinating publication devoted to the art of phone phreaking and hacking. Has an expose of cordless phone security systems and ways of defeating them. Also has collections of news about the latest techniques and failures or successes—as well as FBI busts of hackers. For a copy send $3 (including postage) to: Root Zine, PO Box 1178, Maplewood, NJ 07040, USA. E-mail: mutter@openix.com

Secrets Of A Super Hacker by The Knightmare (Paladin Press) ISBN 1-55950-1-06-5 How crafty hackers can attack computers and read, ruin or copy any of your information. A very practical book with tales of how hackers bombard systems with passwords, deliver fake e-mail and much more. (AK)

Strategy Not Astrology

Armed Joy by Alfredo M Bonanno (Elephant Editions) No ISBN As if we needed telling, this is a pamphlet that sets out the misery and pointlessness of existence in capitalist society. Posits a set of ideas and suggestions for joyful revolutionary activity aimed at shattering the facade of power, and so enable us to start living real lives. Order a copy for £3.00 (including postage) from: Elephant Editions, BM Elephant, London, WC1N 3XX, UK.

The Art of War by Sun Tzu (Wordsworth Reference) ISBN 1-85326-305-2 Written in China 2,500 years ago, this classic strategy book is still read by military officers the world over for its insights into the art and science of warfare. Know your enemy. (BK)

Bolo'Bolo by PM (Semiotext(e)) ISBN 0-936756-08-X The anonymous PM maps out an inspiring plan for the creation of a global network of bolo's—autonomous zones. A wild, desire-fuelled dream of mutual aid and voluntary co-operation that aims to help destroy the capitalist/socialist planetry work machine. (AK)

Earthforce! An Earth Warriors Guide to Strategy by Captain Paul Watson (Chaco Press) ISBN 0-9616019-5-7 Cut through the utter shit that this book is full of and there are few interesting thoughts and ideas on strategy for eco-action. My favourite is The Laws of Eco-Guerrilla Activity—with gems like 'Never participate in covert or illegal action with your wife or husband, boyfriend, girlfriend or lover' and 'Do not participate in any action with any individual unless you have known the person for seven years'—seriously! (BK)

Guerrillas in the Mist—A Battlefield Guide to Clandestine Warfare by Bob Newman (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-944-3 Learn about warfare as



practised by guerrillas for thousands of years. Draws examples from history and applies proven principles to cover every facet of warfare; from basic fieldcraft, boobytraps and ambushes through to nocturnal operations, strategy and tunnel construction! (PAL)

Revolutionary Self Theory—A Beginners Manual by Spectacular Times (Spectacular Times) ISBN 0-907837-10-7 A booklet for people dissatisfied with the world. A guide to the pleasure of thinking for yourself—a sharp, thought-provoking, concise read from the situ-theory for normal people bunch. Should be compulsory reading for all revolutionaries, so order a copy for £1.50 (including postage) from: A Distribution, 84b Whitechapel High Street, London, E1, UK.

Total Resistance by Major H Von Dach (Paladin Press) No ISBN Written for the civil defence networks in Switzerland this book covers how small groups of people should resist an invading or occupying military force—ideal for all us *Red Dawn* film fanatics. (PAL)

Towards a Citizens Militia—Anarchist Alternatives to NATO and the Warsaw Pact by IRSM and 1st May Group (Cienfuegos Press) ISBN 0-904564-33-9 This A4 pamphlet has been knocking around for a while now and has achieved an almost mythical status in some circles. It's nothing special really—just a very basic guide to some tactics that may be useful to a freedom fighter/guerrilla/terrorist force operating against organised military/police units. Spattered with some libertarian leftist/anarchist views throughout, much of the information is very dated and it harks of RAF/Angry Brigade activity in the 70s. (BK)

Outdoor Skills

A Manual of Modern Rope Techniques by Nigel Shepard (Constable) ISBN 0-09-469170-3 A pocket sized guide that covers a wide range of rope techniques including knots, abseiling, snow, rock and ice anchors and ascending. Ideal for beginners and experts alike. (BK)

Mountain Craft and Leadership by Eric Langmuir (The Scottish Sports Council/The Mountain Leader Training Board) ISBN 1-855060-295-6 Compiled and approved by the Mountain Leader Boards of Great Britain and Northern Island this covers a vast array of techniques, essential information and practical skills. Has sections on ropework, navigation, crossing dangerous terrain, safety, first aid and equipment. (BK)

Mountain Navigation by Peter Cliff (Highland Printers) ISBN 1-871890-55-1 The reference book for those who want to learn how to find their way around in mountain or hill country. Clear, precise and comprehensive instructions on every aspect of navigation using a map and compass. (BK)

Staying Found—The Complete Map and Compass Handbook by June Fleming (The Mountaineers) ISBN 0-89886-397-X Covers the simplest way to plan routes and find your way through tricky terrain. Also has sections on navigation in low visibility, using nature as a guide, and teaching kids to 'stay found'. (BK)

Grow Your Own

The Complete Manual of Organic Gardening edited by Basil Caplan (Headline) ISBN 1-55859-644-5 Produced by the Organic Gardening Magazine team this is as good an 'all-round' manual as you can get. Recommended for beginners. (BK)

Dig For Revolution! by Graham Burnett (Self Published) No ISBN A small but snazzy little booklet packed with information about growing your own organic food. Gives details of various crops and has a historical/political perspective on land usage. (LL)

The Encyclopaedia of Organic Gardening by Bradley and Ellis (Rodale Press) ISBN 0-875-965-917 The latest encyclopaedia from America's foremost organic gardener. Contains a huge amount of information and is an indispensable resource for every gardener. (ECO)

Forest Gardening by Robert A de J Hart (Green Earth Books) ISBN 1-900322-02-1 Designed to achieve the utmost economy of space and labour, a forest garden is a tiny imitation of a natural forest. Requires minimal maintenance and can provide year round supplies of fruit, nuts, herbs as well as root and perennial vegetables. This book includes guides on species selection, designing and looking after a temperate forest garden. Even made me excited about growing food. (PP)

Getting Started in Permaculture by Ross and Jenny Mars (Rodale Institute) ISBN 064620-090-9 A very practical manual with step-by-step guides for garden projects. Includes mulching, raised beds, ponds, walls, hothouses and DIY fertilisers. Packed with illustrations and diagrams. (PP)



How To Grow Natural Herbs and Spices by Charlotte de la Bedoyere (Search Press) ISBN 0-855-32751-0 Successful organic growing principles for most of the popular herbs. Also has a section on spices and hundreds of colour photos and illustrations. (BK)

How to Grow More Vegetables Than You Ever Thought Possible On Less Land Than You Can Imagine by John Jeavons (Ten Speed Press) ISBN 1-58008-016-2 How you can grow fresh organic vegetables for a family of four for a year on 800 square feet or less. Has detailed charts, diagrams, photographs and clear text to explain this bio-intensive method. Covers sustainability, companion planting and seed propagation. One of the best gardening books you can get. (PP)

How to Make a Forest Garden by Patrick Whitefield (Permaculture Publications) ISBN 1-856623-008-2 This book is a guide to creating a maximum output for minimum labour food-producing garden. Highly practical and inspiring, it gives you information on everything you need to know about forest gardening. Includes sections on basic principles, layout, how to choose plants and much more. (PP)

Introduction to Permaculture by Bill Mollison and Reny Mia Slay (Ten Speed Press) ISBN 0-90822-808-2 Outlines the philosophy as well as giving masses of practical examples. Topics covered include gardens, orchards, farms, small livestock, aquaculture, communities, urban strategies and more. (ECO)

The Permaculture Garden by G Bell (Thorsons) ISBN 0-72252-783-7 A practical book that concentrates on permaculture gardening in the UK. Well written with lots of clear illustrations this book shows how even the smallest backyard or brambliest allotment can be transformed to a beautiful and productive garden. (ECO)

The Pip Book by Keith Mossman (Not Known) No ISBN Precise instructions on how to go about raising avocados, peanuts, kumquats, kiwis, coffee bushes and limes—to name a few—from pips. (CAT)

The Sprouter's Handbook by E Cairney (Argyll Press) ISBN 1-87464-048-3 You don't even need a garden for this—I know a guy who did it whilst hitching! Produce your own bean, peanut, lentil and a whole host of other exciting sprouts. (BK)

Square Foot Gardening by Mel Bartholomew (Rodale Press) ISBN 0-8785-7341-0 Introduces a whole new approach to gardening. Based on foot squares so you can grow as little or as much of any crop that you desire. Ideal for beginners or experts alike. (CAT)

Stoppa-Coppa



The History and Practice of The Political Police in Britain by Tony Bunyan (Quartet Books) ISBN 0-7043-3128-4 The book by which all others on this subject should be judged. Although published in 1977 it is still full of relevant and interesting information on the political role of the police (is there any other?). Has chapters on The Political Uses of the Law, The Uniformed Police, Special Branch, MI5, Private Security Agencies and surveillance methods. A must read for us all. (BK)

Riot Control—Material and Techniques by Colonel Rex Applegate (Paladin Press) No ISBN Tells you how they contain, subdue and disperse rioters effectively, humanely [!?] and quickly. Includes a complete survey of modern riot control gear including chemical agents (CS Gas etc.) batons, helmets, firearms and vehicles. Hundreds of equipment photos and illustrations are included—wank material for budding TSG recruits no doubt. (PAL)

Police Crowd Control—Risk Reduction Strategies for Law Enforcement by Captain Charles Beene (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-674-6 Written by the ex-head of the San Francisco Police Department, this shows how the US police use the media, instant mobile response, barricades and multiple arrests to try and manage and control us in crowd situations. Although obviously very USA orientated it makes for interesting reading anyway. Any ideas of an official UK police equivalent anyone? (PAL)



Shooting in the Dark—Riot Police In Britain by Gerry Northam (Faber and Faber) ISBN 0-571-15090 A study of the paramilitary policing that's used in major public order confrontations. Draws on unpublished police documents, case studies and interviews, and then pulls all this together into an interesting and informative book. Includes excerpts from the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Public Order Manual—the official guide on cop riot tactics. (BK)

Anti-Psychiatry

Asylum—A Journal For Democratic Psychiatry (Self Published) No ISSN Now in its thirteenth year *Asylum* magazine is a forum for debate between users and professionals from the world of psychiatry. Produced by 'patients' each issue covers a wide variety of topics. Copies cost £1.50 each from: Manor Farm, Brightholmlee, Sheffield, S35 0DB, UK.

Call Me Crazy—Stories from the Mad Movement by Irit Shimrat (Press Gang Publishers) ISBN 0-88974-070-4 Partly a personal history of the author who 'went crazy' three times in her life, partly a history of the anti-psychiatry movement and partly a resource for anyone who wants alternatives to psychiatry. Has some suggestions for society as a whole and others which are practical tips for individuals to implement now. (BK)

Lunatic Fringe—Journal of the Psychiatric Inmates' Liberation Movement A one person 'zine that doesn't so much focus on psychiatric oppression as it does on concerns that are related to the people who are involved with the mental health system—homelessness, welfare and unwanted pregnancy. For a copy send $3 to: Lunatic Fringe, PO Box 7652, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, USA.

Alternative Power

Off The Grid—Managing Independent Renewable Electricity Systems by Paul Allen and Bob Todd (Centre for Alternative Technology) No ISBN How to design, install and look after small scale RE systems and live unplugged from the grid. Covers resource evaluation, AC or DC, batteries, control systems and case studies. (CAT)

The Practical Solar Handbook—A Step-By-Step Guide to Installing Your Own Solar Water Heating System by Bushell (Centre For laternative Technology) No ISBN A step-by-step guide to the installation of solar hot water heating systems. Intended for the basic DIYer it covers the essentials of some tried and trusted systems. (CAT)

Solar Water Heating—A DIY Guide by P Trimby (Centre for Alternative Technology) ISBN 1-898049-11-4 A companion to *Tapping The Sun* (see below) it covers the more DIY end of the spectrum. Includes bits on making your own solar panels, connecting and installing them, building pumping devices. (CAT)

Tapping the Sun—A Solar Water Heating Guide by B Horne (Centre for Alternative Technology) ISBN 1-898049-01-7 Everything you need to know before buying and installing a solar water heating system. Includes sections on how they work, types of systems and where to get hold of them. Includes a UK resource list. (CAT)

Windpower Workshops—Building Your Own Wind Turbine by Hugh Piggott (Centre for Alternative Technology) ISBN 1-898049-20-3 Fuck corporate windpower—build your own! This book explains how to make a turbine from scrap, safety issues, rotor blades, electrical stuff and gives case studies, a glossary and resource guide. (CAT)

Drugs

Beyond AA—Dealing Responsibly With Alcohol by Clarence Barrett (Positive Attitudes) ISBN 0-9630292-9-0 A few people I know could do with reading this book—myself included probably. Offers approaches to people who would either like to cut down or quit alcohol. The key to the technique is willpower and after discussing the problems with Alcoholics Anonymous the author gives simple advice for controlling or stopping your drinking. Alcohol is a weapon of the State! (BK)

The Cultivators Guide to Marijuana by William Drake (Ronin Publishing) ISBN 0-914171-53-4 A fully updated and revised edition of the classic. Has information on growing weed indoors and outside and is full of examples, illustrations and horticultural knowledge. (AK)

The Good Booze Recipe and Cookbook by James C Krohn (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-450-6 Tells you the equipment you'll need to set up a still and the techniques for producing clear sugar alcohol that you can then flavour or cut with gin, whiskey, vodka etc.. (PAL)

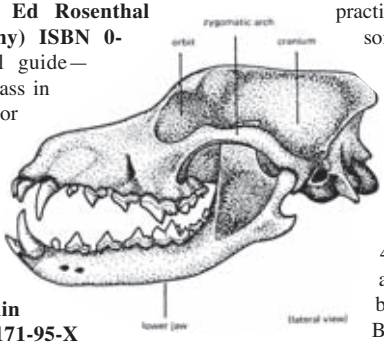
A Guide to British Psilocybin Mushrooms by Anonymous (Self Published) No ISBN This book-



let is about the species of hallucinogenic mushrooms that grow here in the UK. Has sections on identification, types, collecting, dosage, effects and a list of further reading. (BK)

The Ibogaine Story—Report on the Staten Island Project by Paul De Rienzo, Dana Beal and others (Autonomedia) ISBN 1-57027-029-5 Ibogaine is an alkaloid derived from an African bush that has shown to be incredibly effective (unlike methadone) in treating addiction to heroin, alcohol, cocaine and nicotine. This book tells the story of its use and the suppression of it by the State, anti-drug zealots and the pharmaceutical industries. (BK)

Marijuana Growers Handbook—Indoor and Greenhouse Edition by Ed Rosenthal (Quick Trading Company) ISBN 0-932551-00-9 The seminal guide—apparently—for growing grass in attics, basements, closets or any other enclosed space. Hydroponics, soil growing, lighting and more are all discussed here. (BK)



Peyote and Other Psychoactive Cacti by Adam Gottlieb (Ronin Publishing) ISBN 0-914171-95-X Has a short section on methods of ingestion, legality (in the USA) and effects. The bulk of the book is taken up with telling you how to find, grow and graft psychoactive cacti. Has bits on how to increase the potency and extract pure mescaline or alkaloid mixtures from them. (BK)

Psilocybin Mushrooms of the World—An Identification Guide by Paul Stamets (Ten Speed Press) ISBN 0-89815-839-7 This book is the most complete, detailed reference guide for magic mushrooms ever published. The focal point of it is the 130 pages that describe in detail—with illustrations for them all—around 85 species from all over the world. Has information on where to find them, collecting, preserving and preparation. (BK)

Psychedelic Shamanism—The Cultivation, Preparation and Shamanic Use Of Psychotropic Plants by Jim Dekorne (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-1-10-3 A volume on the cultivation, preparation and use of psychotropic plants. Has thorough and detailed description of plants and their extracts. (AK)

Stoned Free—How to Get High Without Drugs by Patrick Wells and Douglas Rushcroft (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-126-X All about using those natural drug-free methods to induce rushes, highs and other altered states of consciousness. From fasting, eye visuals and chants through to sleep deprivation, skydiving, silence and sex. (BK)

Wild Things

Creating a Flower Meadow by Yvette Verner (Green Earth Books) ISBN 1-900322-08-0 This shows you how you can have a wild flower meadow, and all the wildlife that goes with it, in your garden—or anywhere you plant it even! Good practical information that includes a season calendar, lists of all types of species and a contact list. (ECO)

Flora Britannica by Richard Mabey (Chetto and Windus) ISBN 1-85619-377-2 Not only a guide to British wild flowers, plants and trees, but a history of their relationship to humans. Over 4,000 people submitted memories, anecdotes and folk history to this book. A sort of plant Doomsday Book for the end of the 20th Century. (BK)

The Food Insects Newsletter Long-standing newsletter that promotes the study of insects as part of the human diet. Part anthropology, part entomology and part uncharted cuisine it includes actual recipes! One issue costs $1.50 and a five issue subscription $5. Send to: Florence Dunkel, Department of Entomology, 324 Leon Johnson Hall, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717-0302, USA.

Food for Free by Richard Mabey (HarperCollins Publishers) ISBN 0-00-219865-7 This classic book details some of the huge number and variety of wild foods available here in the UK. Has sections on trees, plants, fungi and shellfish—all accompanied by colour pictures for help in identification as well as some suggestions for preparation. (BK)

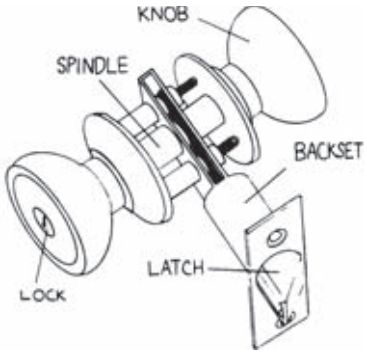
Mammals of Britain—Their Tracks, Trails and Signs by MJ Lawrence and RW Brown (Blandford Press) ISBN 0-7137-0588-4 Although fairly old and probably quite difficult to get hold of (our copy was found outside a charity shop in the bins—don't even ask!) this is a very comprehensive



field guide. Includes colour photos and diagrams of tracks and skeletal remains as well as habitat and distribution information for all UK mammals. (BK)

Plants for a Future—Edible and Useful Plants For A Healthier World by Ken Fern (Permanent Publications) ISBN 1-85623-011-2 Describes British, European and temperate edible and useful plants. Has information on growing herbs, vegetables, flowers, shrubs and trees. Packed with information, anecdotes and indexes. Comprehensive and recommended. (PF)

Pocket Guide to Wildlife of Britain and Europe edited by Michael Chinery (Larousse) ISBN 0-7523-0019-9 A clearly organised pocket guide to mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes and invertebrates. Full of colour illustrations as well as including basic information such as recognisable features and habitats. (BK)



Tracking—A Blueprint for Learning How by Jack Kearney (Paladin Press) No ISBN A retired US Border patrol agent passes on his knowledge in this easy to read guide to tracking people through wild terrain. Has sections on identifying tracks, determining direction and age, utilising sun angle and much more. (PAL)

Tree Planting and Aftercare by British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (Self Published) ISBN 0-946-752-079 Covers planning and design for conservation and amenity, the law, safety, equipment, seed collection, planting, aftercare, species tables and lists of suppliers. (ECO)

Wild and Free—An Introduction to British Wild Foods (Self Published) No ISBN A double sided A3 info-sheet packed with details on—as it says—wild foods found here in the UK. Has bits on some common foods that we all recognise (including acorns, dandelion and stinging nettles) and a few suggestions for recipes. Available for an SAE (although donations are welcome) from: Box B (NV) 111 Magdelen Road, Oxford, OX4 1RQ, UK.

Wild Food by Roger Phillips (Peter Smith Publishers) ISBN 0-84466-262-3 Eat your weeds and enjoy them! Back in print this book is arranged month by month with excellent photos. Probably one of the best books to aid identification and, as a major plus, it also includes recipes. (ECO)

Lockpicking

Complete Guide to Lockpicking by Eddie the Wire (Paladin Press) No ISBN One of the most precise and detailed books on lockpicking ever. It has information on how to open all types of locks—as well as tips for preventing people breaking into yours. (PAL)

Expedient B&E—Tactics and Techniques for Bypassing Alarms and Defeating Locks by Carl Hammer (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-688-6 The professionals guide to getting into places where you shouldn't be. Covers reconnaissance and planning, has an examination of types of locks and alarms, as well as instructions for opening filing cabinets, cars and safes. (PAL)

Secrets of Lockpicking by Stephen Hampton (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-423-9 Reveals the skills, tricks and tools needed for bypassing key and combination tumbler, pin, mushroom, magnetic, warded and cylinder locks. (PAL)

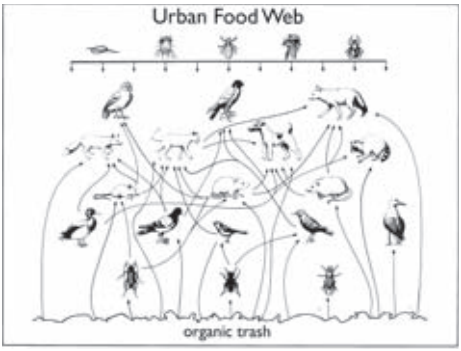
Stomach Stuff

Animal Free Shopper—A Shopping Guide for Those Wishing to Avoid Animal Suffering by The Vegan Society (The Vegan Society) ISBN 0-907337-21-X Ignore the awful title and this is a good pocket sized book. Lists the ingredients of most food products, non-vegan E numbers, vegan toiletries, cosmetics, home and office supplies and loads of animal friendly contacts. (BK)

Animal Ingredients A to Z compiled by EG Smith Collective (AK Press) ISBN 1-87317-6-59-7 Easy to use and concise guide to animal and animal-derived ingredients. Has chapters on vegan nutrition, alternatives to animal produce, a resource listing and—most importantly—a guide to vegan alcohol. (AK)

Blatant Raw Foodist Propaganda! by Joe Alexander (Blue Dolphin Publishing) ISBN 0-931892-1-7 Interesting book that proposes the theo-





ry that our bodies have evolved to deal with—almost exclusively—raw food, and that nearly all our illnesses and problems now are due to the consumption of cooked processed food. I was sceptical—but read this and be convinced! Goes on to explain how to move back to a raw food diet. (BK)

Food Not Bombs—How to Feed the Hungry and Build Community by CT Lawerence Butler and Keith McHenry (New Society Press) ISBN 0-86571-239-5 A manual showing how volunteer groups can practice mutual aid by distributing food to those that need it. Has ideas, practical experience, a few recipes, dealing with the police/media and more. (AK)

Modern Stoves For All by Waclaw Micuta (Intermediate Technology) ISBN 0-9466-835-4 A book for anyone interested in designing and building fuel efficient stoves. Charts the basic principles, cooking pots, alternative fuels, specifications, construction, testing of different models and cooking methods. (PP)

The Stone Age Diet—The Natural Way to Eat by Leon Chaitow (Optima) ISBN 0-356-12328-6 Our Stone Age ancestors were stronger and healthier than us. This book examines their diet and argues that it was largely because of what they ate. Discusses ways in which this diet can be adapted to today's available foods. (BK)

Soy Not Oi! by the Hippycore Crew (Self Published) No ISBN Simple yummy vegan food presented in punk-as-fuck recipe-writing, including 'Bring back Black Sabbath bean casserole' and 'Biscuits not Bombs'. Plus rants on 'why I'm a vegan', homebrewing and outdated nutritional info. For a copy send £2.00 (UK) or £2.50 (Europe) to: Active Distribution, BM Active, WC1N 3XX, London, UK.

The Vegan Handbook by Debra Wasserman (Vegetarian Resource Group) ISBN 0-93141117-3 A massive resource book containing recipes, cooking tips, essays on veganism and related subjects, the history of veganism and more. (AK)

The Wild and Free Cookbook by Tom Squier (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-128-6 Tom 'Road Kill King' Squier gives tips on preparing and cooking hundreds of dishes made from wild plants. Also includes ideas of recipes for rabbit, snake, catfish, alligator, racoon and buffalo—if you're into to that sort of thing. (LP)

Well Fed—Not an Animal Dead by Graham Burnett (Self Published) No ISBN A guide to the wider implications of a vegan diet. Has sections on growing your own, food for free, vegan mothers and infants as well as brewing your own alcohol. (LL)

Communications

Access To The Airwaves—My Fight For Free Radio by Allan H Weiner (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-163-4 A well known pirate radio station figures in US history. here recounts his arrests, legal battles and general philosophy—worth reading for any budding pirateers. (LP)

The Bug Book—Wireless Microphones and Surveillance Transmitters by ML Shannon (Lysias Press) ISBN 1-884451-00-4 Has an emphasis on the practical and is mainly about the transmitters available to everyone. There is information on detecting bugs and what to do when you find them. Also has a question and answer chapter and a list of more resources for both books and equipment. (BK)

The Complete Manual of Pirate Radio by Zeke Teflon (See Sharp Press) ISBN 0-9613289-9-1 Written with the USA in mind this may not be that relevant for anyone in Europe trying to get a pirate station together. Having said this it still may be worth looking at in conjunction with some of the others mentioned in this section. Includes pieces on considerations, getting away with it, transmitters, antennas and mobile operations. Also has a further reading list that may be useful. (AK)

Flyposter Frenzy by Matthew Fuller (Working Press) ISBN 1-870736-15-X Dozens of posters from the anti-copyright network. Loads of contributors

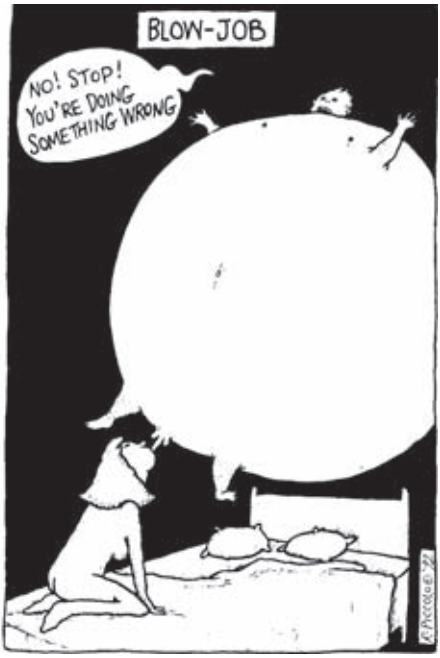
add their bit to this wild overview of xerox satire and propaganda. As relevant now as when printed—get copying! (CP)

Improvised Radio Jamming Techniques—Electronic Guerrilla Warfare by Lawrence W Myers (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-520-0 A practical field guide outlining improvised methods of intercepting, identifying, analysing and jamming radio traffic. Covers the different phases of electronic warfare and gives a breakdown of a jamming operation. (PAL)

Make A Zine!—A Guide to Self Publishing Disguised as a Book on How to Produce a Zine by Bill Brent (Black Books) ISBN 0-9637401-4-8 Getting material, creating the zine, photos, distribution, legal matters and loads more. Has loads of useful contacts at the back including shops, distributors, review publications and other 'how-to' books. (AK)

Pirate Radio Operations by Andrew Yodler and Earl T Gray (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-151-0 A 400 page book telling you how to take back the airwaves by operating your own low cost radio station. Includes ways of getting cheap equipment from markets, setting up a studio, broadcasting, safety issues and frequencies. Has a section at the back listing more resources. (AK)

Print—How You Can Do It Yourself by Jonathon Zietlyn (Journeyman) ISBN 1-85172-0-49-9 An excellent step-by-step guide to anyone wanting a hands-on approach to printing. (AK)



Radio Is My Bomb—A DIY Manual for Pirates (Hooligan Press) ISBN 1-869802-03-9 The—almost certainly out of print now—pirate radio classic. Has a very practical focus with chapters on building FM transmitters, legal implications and experiences from other pirate stations. Although a lot of the technical information is now probably out of date this is still the most relevant manual for all those thinking of setting up a pirate station in the UK. Hard to get hold of—but worth trying. (BK)

Radiotext(e) by Neil Strauss and Dave Mandl (Semiotext(e)) ISBN 0-93675-6-94-2 An anthology of essays about radical pirate radio and other tales of the airwaves. Pirates, theory, practice, rants, monologues and philosophy. (AK)

Sex

I Am My Lover—Women Pleasure Themselves edited by Joani Blank (Down There Press) ISBN 0-940208-18-0 This book documents and discusses the solo-sex sessions of a dozen women whilst still managing to have a respectful and joyous attitude. Best quote: 'My first masturbation to orgasm was on the day of Holy Communion; it happened outdoors with a tree that I used to climb. It was my first real sexual, spiritual experience, and it was with Nature, not the Church.' (BK)

The Art of Auto-Fellatio—Oral Sex for One by Garry Griffin (Added Dimensions Publishing) ISBN 1-897967-11-1 A complete guide to teach men how to perform oral sex on themselves. Has loads of letters and photos of people doing it—yes it really is possible! Hmmmghhhruupp. (BK)

The Compleat Spanker by Lady Green (Greenery Press) ISBN 1-890159-00-X This manual tells you everything you want to know about smacking for sexual pleasure. Covers mood, warming up, implements, where to strike, tips and tricks and much [too much?] more. (BK)

Decircumcision—Circumsion Practices and Foreskin Restoration Methods by Gary Griffin (Added Dimensions Press) ISBN 1-897967-05-7 The mutilation of penises has been widespread for around 4000 years. In this book the author traces the practice across time and through cultures. Discusses



the pros and cons of male circumcision, the medical methods of restoration and the DIY version with a roll of tape—cheaper and safer! (BK)

Exhibitionism for the Shy—Show Off, Dress Up and Talk Hot by Carol Queen (Down There Press) ISBN 0-940208-16-4 Sex-positive activist Carol overcame her shyness and now wants to help you overcome yours! She presents instructions for talking sexy on the phone (hello MI5) dressing up, awakening your sexual persona, finding partners, group sex and working in peep shows. (BK)

The Guide to Getting it On—A New and Mostly Wonderful Book About Sex by Paul Joannides (Goofy Foot Press) ISBN 1-885535-14-7 Winner of a book award for best sex book this is a light-hearted practical manual about sex. Aimed at heterosexuals, it starts by dealing with topics such as preliminaries, orgasms, fluids and getting naked. Goes on to cover masturbation, finger fucking, oral and anal sex, massages, sex toys and much more. Has facts, observations and tips on relationships, religion, fetishes, abortion and safe sex. (BK)

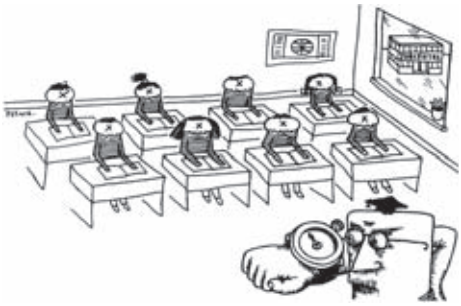
A Hand in the Bush—The Fine Art of Vaginal Fisting by Deborah Addington (Greenery Press) ISBN 1-890159-02-6 Fisting—for the uninitiated—is the art of inserting one's entire hand into a person's anus or vagina for sexual pleasure. This is the first book ever published on the subject and it has a detailed history, answers to many of your burning questions and also includes poems and practical lessons on how to do it. Workshop at the Earth First! Summer Gathering anyone? (AK)

Kinkycrafts—101 Do-It-Yourself S/M Toys edited by Lady Green with James Easton (Greenery Press) ISBN 0-9739763-7-0 Want S/M gear but can't afford it? Well here is a guide to making your own stuff—from adjustable ankle spreaders, ball crushers and bondage benches through to suspension harnesses, spandex hoods and labia stretchers. Careful though or you may have Amnesty International after you—if you're lucky! (BK)

The Politically Correct Guide to Getting Laid by Tuppy Owens and friends (The Leydig Trust) ISBN 1-872819-08-7 How to flirt, chat people up and sleep together, all with a caring 90s PC edge to it. Less of a 'how-to' manual and more of a piss taking book of ideas to get you laughing and thinking. (BK)

Sex Information—May I Help You? by Isadora Alman (Down There Press) ISBN 0-94020-8-14-8 A frank look at sexually transmitted diseases, sexual turn-ons, group sex, masturbation, pregnancy, contraception, disability, ageing, cross-dressing and a whole host of other topics. Written by the long time director of the San Francisco sex helpline. (AK)

Fuck School!



As Soon As You're Born They Make You Feel Small—Self Determination for Children by Anonymous (AK Press) No ISBN First published in the UK in 1986 this is a classic in the field of children's liberation. It rails against—amongst other things—child abuse, corporal punishment, gender stereotypes, harmful toys and school. Also re-prints the manifesto 'Youth Liberation Program.' (AK)

Deschooling Our Lives edited by Matt Hern (New Society Publishers) ISBN 0-86571-342-1 An essential collection of material that condemns the contemporary school system and offers alternatives such as home schooling, community learning and free schools. Ends with a list of other resources on the same subject. (BK)

The Free School by W Kenneth Richmond (Methuen) ISBN 416-75930-0 Explores the root of the educational malaise and looks at what can be done to free education from its rigid and hierarchical nineteenth century organisation. (BK)

Lib Ed—A magazine for the liberation of learning (Self Published) ISSN 0267-8500 An annual magazine for anyone interested in radical libertarian education. History, news and analysis of all forms of education. Contact them at: Libertarian Education Collective, Phoenix House, 157 Wells Road, Bristol, BS4 2BU, UK. (AK)

The Teenage Liberation Handbook—How to Quit School and Get a Real Life and Education by



Grace Llewellyn (Lowry House Publishers) ISBN 0-9629591-0-3 How to de-school yourself. Has details on all the issues surrounding it including the legal implications, dealing with adults and learning once outside school. In the final section it includes stories about what people have done with their lives when not constrained by the educational system. I wish I'd had this book when I was younger. (BK)

Wild Children by Peter Lamborn Wilson and Dave Mandl (Autonomedia) ISBN 0-936756-83-7 Pranks, poems, prose and graphics all by contributors aged from 0-18 years old. Re-prints the excellent 'School Stoppers' handbook. (AK)

The End...

The Dead Good Funerals Book by Sue Gill and John Fox (Engineers Of The Imagination) ISBN 0-95271-590-2 A collection of examples, ideas and information to provide a catalyst for anyone seeking to avoid 'traditional' funerals. Outlines the legal requirements and a host of alternatives to crap funeral arrangements. (CAT)

The Hit Man—A Technical Manual for Independent Contractors by Rex Feral (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-276-7 Has detailed instructions on how to kill people for money—including creating a false identity, using a silencer, making the kill, as well as that ever important point—getting away afterwards. The publishers are currently being sued by the family of somebody who was killed by a reader of this book. (PAL)

The Secret Art of Strangulation by Dr Hana Lung (Paladin Press) ISBN 0-87364-843-9 This book has two parts with the first half detailing the history of the secret sect of the Thugee in India and their strangulation techniques. The second half presents 55 pages of detailed instructions on how they killed people with strangleholds and neck breaking. (PAL)

Silent Death by Uncle Fester (Loompanics Unlimited) ISBN 1-55950-159-6 What makes a good poison? Covers delivery to the target as the best poison in the world is useless if you can't work out how to feed it to the victim. Also has a section on autopsy, including a piece on what the medical examiners will look for in cases of suspicious death. (LP)





Book Brokers and Pamphlet Pushers

The code in brackets after each review relates to the key below. This is where we think it's easiest to get hold of a copy of the publication listed. Wherever possible we have also included the ISBN/ISSN reference so you can order it from any bookshop—although most will be able to find copies using only the writers/editors name or publisher if the ISBN/ISSN is not known. Remember that libraries will order any book for you—and this way others can read it after you!

(AK) AK Press and Distribution (Europe) PO Box 12766, Edinburgh, EH8 9YE, Scotland. Telephone: 0131 555 5165. E-mail: ak@akedin.demon.co.uk Although they don't stock most of the books listed above they are always worth checking out as they are probably the best distributor of anti-authoritarian/anarchist books in the world. Send an A4 SAE for their exciting and comprehensive catalogue.

(BK) Bookshops. The resources that are marked by this code were obtained at various bookshops—some mainstream, some radical and some secondhand. Check out your local ones and ask if they can order it for you. A list of radical bookshops was published on page 152 in *Do or Die* No. 7. Another list is featured in the front of the 1999 AK Press catalogue.

(CAT) Centre for Alternative Technology Mail Order Department, Machynlleth, Powys, SY20 9AZ, UK. Telephone: 01654 703409. Comprehensive catalogue containing books on most things with an ecological focus. Includes stuff on alternative power, composting, gardening and house construction. Send an A5 SAE for a catalogue.

(CP) Counter Productions, PO Box 556, London, SE5 ORL, UK. A huge selection of unusual publications from the marginal milieu and beyond. Everything you could imagine, a few you couldn't and some you definitely wouldn't want to—send an A5 SAE or some stamps for a catalogue. Highly recommended.

(ECO) Eco-Logic Books, Mulberry House, 19 Maple Grove, Bath, BA2 3AF, UK. Telephone: 01225 484472. Excellent catalogue with books and pamphlets on gardening, self-sufficiency, fields and wildflowers, building and trade skills. Send an A5 SAE for a catalogue.

(LL) Land and Liberty, 35 Rayleigh Avenue, Westcliff on Sea, Essex, SSO 7DS, UK. Good little distribution service that has a selection of pamphlets on organic gardening, animal liberation and land use. Send an A5 SAE for a catalogue.

(LP) Loompanics Unlimited, PO Box 1197, Port Townsend, WA 98368, USA. Telephone: 360 385 2230. E-mail: loompanx@olympus.net Barking mad whacked-out libertarian fringe of the increasingly bizarre American political scene. Has publications on everything from surviving interrogation to building your own weapons. Although most books are very USA-centric the catalogue is worth getting—if only for a laugh.

(PAL) Paladin Press, PO Box 1307-7FSF, Boulder, CO 80306, USA. Telephone: 303 443 7250. E-mail: service@paladinpress.com Another warning here—Paladin Press is chock full of militaristic authoritarian US militia shit. Despite this, once you have stripped away the offensive ideologies you may find some useful, universally applicable nuggets of information. Use a false name and address when ordering this catalogue.

(PP) Permanent Publications, Hyden House Ltd., The Sustainability Centre, East Meon, Hampshire, GU32 1HR, UK. Telephone: 01730 823311. Publishes the Earth Repair Catalogue which is full of cool books on forest gardening, alternative technology, low impact dwellings and loads more.

(PF) Plants For a Future, The Field, Penpol, Lostwithel, Cornwall, PL22 ONG, UK. Telephone: 01208 873554 or 872963. A resource and information centre for details on edible and other useful plants. Publishes free/cheap photocopied leaflets and information sheets on all sorts of subjects relating to plant usage. Send an A5 SAE for more information.

We first heard about loads of the books reviewed from *Psychotropedia—A Guide to Publications on the Periphery* by Russ Kick (Critical Vision, Manchester, UK, 1998.) ISBN 1-900486-03-2 For details on how to order this book send an A4 SAE to: Critical Press, PO Box 26, Manchester, M26 1PQ, UK. The US magazine *Factsheet Five—your perpetually suprising guide to the zine revolution* also has thousands of reviews and contact details for some of the more esoteric publications around. Contact them at: Factsheet Five, PO Box 170099, San Francisco, CA 94117-0099, USA. Also worth trying are the numerous book/author search engines on the web.

Lettuce to the Cabbage

Come on in Number 7—Your Time is Up...

These pages are open access and we will print most letters we receive—although remember that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the Do or Die Editorial Collective. Due to space constraints it would be good if letters could be kept to around 500 words, and sending them as text files on disks would mean less work to do for us. It also makes it more likely that your letter will appear without spelling mistakes or bits missing due to our appalling typing! Unless otherwise marked we will assume all letters received are for publication—although the names and addresses of senders will not be printed unless relevant.

Fuck Off!

Dear Do or Die!

Publish this! Ha Ha Ha!!! Publish an article that slags us off! Print loads of inaccuracies in the article! Refuse us a right to reply! Waste a quarter of a page telling people that you refused us a right to reply! And then you ask us to help you distribute it! FUCK OFF!

With love from the corporate sell-out department at Undercurrents.

You're Crap

Dear DoD,

Thanks for carrying Gandalf news and London Greenpeace's defiance pledge (pp.129-131)—even if your report was crap.

We don't "mix up…revolutionary calls with concerns for civil liberties". We're clear the basis of the *bourgeois* State is the social contract and the Gandalf prosecution's tyrannical negation of rights of expression, association and conscience justifies a revolutionary response, even in *their* terms. Just because your writer's so mixed up he can't get beyond his liberalism doesn't mean this message should be obscured from your readers so *they* are prevented from responding appropriately too.

Re. "winning", our main role is to discredit Gandalf trials so they can't be used to legitimise conspiracy/incitement laws as a generalised repressive instrument against the direct action movement. Through this, we can hope to discredit the State as a whole in our small way. If the State's shown to deny our rights rather than guarantee them, justice can only come about through its revolutionary abolition. If we acknowledge any of their procedures, it's only to show they're self-serving and/or absurd. For example, combining burning the judge in effigy on 2nd February 1998 with applying to him to stand down on grounds of personal animosity towards the defendants effectively showed the impossibility of justice in this case. Similarly, appeals to liberal bodies have largely been made to show how useless they are rather than to divert campaigning into futile, piecemeal lobbying. Rarely, they have proved useful despite themselves. *Index*, for example, effectively took direct action bypassing State censorship by putting 'inciting' texts on the Net.

Calling for direct action, a revolutionary response to the Gandalf prosecution isn't "promot[ing] the revolutionary politics of Green Anarchist" as your writer offensively suggests. It's just a common-sense response to political prosecution. There's nothing specifically anarcho-primitivist in it. Anarcho-primitivism in an anti-ideological tendency anyway—we would no more want to impose it on any animal lib ideologues sharing the dock with us than anyone else! As Camatte and Colli argue in *On Organisation*, propaganda *represses* revolutionary consciousness rather than raising it—if they're right, our ideas are already in everyone's heads anyway!



As your report didn't mention it, I should say here that MI5 want to use the Gandalf prosecution to showcase 'eco-terrorism' and make work post-Cold War. During her 1994 Dimbleby lecture, Stella Rimington said 'subversion' was down and 'terrorism' was up. A vengeful New Labour is now decimating the counter-subversion section. As F2's staff move on to become 'counter-terrorists' they're refiling *us* accordingly. So at the last Gandalf trial, Selwood denounced writers ('subversives') as 'terrorists' for *supporting* direct action, not even *taking* it. We can at best discredit all this by focusing on well-documented *provocateurs* like Tim Hepple (now Matthews) sent into the early-1990s movement to *manufacture* this 'threat'.

Yours for the destruction of civilisation,
John Connor, Oxford GA's, BCM 1715, London, WC1N 3XX, UK.
PS: How could you end your otherwise sympathetic review of Bob Black's *Anarchy After Leftism* (pp.145-6) by referring readers to Fabian 'Fuckwit' Tompsett's crass cowardly libels?! He's more the anti-Semite than Black, defending convicted Holocaust revisionist Robert Faurissan (see his *Sucked*, p.2), Stewart "Long Live Death" Home and his Evolian fascist buddy Tony Wakeford. You reviewed *5th Estate* in the same issue (p.154), so you know what lying scum the Neoists are! For more info, see Larry O'Hara's *Stewart Home and His Fascist Friends*, BM Box 4769, London WC1N 3XX, UK.

An Insight From India

Dear Folks,

I was sent a copy of Do or Die No. 6 by The Land is Ours and have been heartened by it. I'm a member of a radical group in India and work here November to March each year, returning to the UK and following the same principles there.

Being away gives perspective. I'm going to work on the basis that the party political AND economic structures are grossly damaging. This I've been already doing, but have not been 'preaching' it. All our other structures/institutions are also destructive. Firstly, on the advice of folks at my centre I have been finding out more about just and sustainable alternatives in the UK—this has become a pleasure now, rather than a chore.

I see great potential in the LETS scheme (not the trademarked systems!) and applications (informal) of the mediation UK type.

Once one of the unthinking and complacent I have become radicalised by a number of forces—my main 'badge' being that of a poll tax refuser. I was enthused when your movement began and I hope to see it continue—beware Porritt's 'Forum for a Future' which is offering Swampy figures a course of education, with various corporates, so that they can put their case in the right way!! Hope all ignore him—or that volunteers are replaced.

Belonging to the generation that landed you all with this mess of pollution and anomie I can only belatedly pull myself together and do what can be done. Positive microtrends are being supported and recorded by such people as Helena Norberg-Hodge (Ancient Futures), Richard Douthwaite (Short Circuit) and James Robertson (read his briefing on the 'New Economics of Sustainable Development'—better still his 1988 'Sane Alternative'.) Another, Jeremy Seabrook, is taking this up and I hope to arrange a two day exchange to discuss the way forward in Bromsgrove, around April/May.

Before that I'd like to see a few of you and invite you to choose a rep (or two) to join in this discussion. Will be in touch re: this when I get back.
Appreciatively,
AH

The UK's Oldest Political Prisoner...

Dear Members,

Thank you for your *Do or Die* copy No. 7, it was appreciated. It makes one think that perhaps Nature itself has its own plan, and that mankind was allowed to climb so far up the evolutionary chain in order to destroy itself and most of the World. How else to explain the blind greed that so many are infected with?



All those in power will not, cannot, make changes in isolation, particularly in the Oil and related industries. I am too old to live to see the day when change for the worse becomes obvious to all, and irreversible.

It would be interesting to see the panic and realisation set in among those who obviously think that they and the dynasties that they are a part of, or hope to found, cannot after all be untouched by the conditions they have created and which *cannot* be bought off no matter how much money they have.

Yes, Nature is tilling its own garden with our help, and what survives or is created in this process can only be another in a long line of experiments. We have the intellect to rise above the challenge, but only by conquering greed and I am afraid that is too strong a trait in too many. Again thank you for so many thought provoking articles.
Sincerely,
Ron Easterbrook B88459, HMP Highdown, Sutton Lane, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 5PJ, UK.



Dead End Workerists?

Dear comrades,

I have issue No. 6 (which is the first *Do or Die* I came across) and I would like to say how very impressed I am by it indeed. Increasingly I am beginning to see that the best and neediest hope for change in society has to occur through eco, environment and lifestyle rather than the old hoped for point of revolution of workplace struggles which take nobody, but nobody, past the end of any particular dispute. Won or lost, capitalism and planet destruction prevails. Challenge to this ugly, wasteful system must now come from a broader, more vital, more far-thinking front.

Best wishes,

FD

Welsh Authoritarians?

Dear Do or Die,

Over the past couple of years, through the counterculture and direct action movement, it has been heartening to see anarchists and other radicals moving away from the sectarianism of the past. *Peace News* is supporting the *GA* and *ALF* Defendants, *Green Anarchist* gives positive reviews of the new look *Class War*, and the *May Day '98* conference brings together all types of anarchists, socialists and libertarian leftists to discuss the future. Great stuff!

I do not want to negate any of this good work, but I would like to highlight the dangers of authoritarian groups masquerading under the anarchist/DIY movement's broad banner. Specifically, I refer to a party calling itself *Cymru Goch* (in Welsh, literally, 'Red Wales'), operating from a PO Box number in Wrexham. They have, I understand, already been listed as a Welsh contact in the pages of *Schnews*, *Animal* and possibly other publications.

The group is keen to present itself as an integral part of our grassroots movement, but the briefest examination of them reveals this to be more than a little misleading. *Cymru Goch* is, for starters, heavily statist. It is allied to the *Scottish Republican Socialist Party* in Glasgow, a group openly hostile to anarchism (and, I might add, noted for its venomous misogyny and homophobia). Indeed, one of the few things that anarchists, DIY-ers and Trotskyists all agree on is that the *SRSP* are—er, potty. (They don't have the members to be considered dangerous).

Cymru Goch, furthermore, claim their Welsh Republican heritage from the legacy of the *Free Wales Army*, a 1960's terrorist outfit led by ultra-patriot Julian Cayo Evans, eulogised in *Cymru Goch's* paper, '*Y Faner Goch*'. The Angry Brigade they weren't—the *FWA* were racist to such a degree that John Tyndall (then of the NF) opened talks with them (see 'To Dream of Freedom' by Roy Lewes (Y Lolfa, 1980)) and they were rabidly KKK-ristian to boot.

In 1996, *Cymru Goch* began negotiations with *Militant Labour* (now *The Socialist Party*) aimed at bringing about a coalition ready to stand in the following year's general election. It was following the failure of this strategy (*Militant* were, quite rightly, suspicious of them!) that the group really pushed to be recognised as a part of the anarchist/DIY underground, talking of its commitment to 'Red, Green and Black' politics. And yet, they have failed to become remotely involved in any DIY struggle in Wales, from the Anti-Election Alliance to the recent campaigns against the building of a McDonald's store in Aberystwyth.

I might, moreover, add that many of the senior party members are academics, and that membership remains overwhelmingly male. Indeed, at least one former female member that I know of quit over the sexism of what she described as the "*sweaty, rugby-lad*" mentality of the membership.

All this suggests that *Cymru Goch* are another tired cadre of the 'old left', and, like the WRP's vampire-like *Reclaim the Future* project, attach themselves to the anarchist/DIY counterculture for ends best described as 'opportunistic'.

Yours sincerely,

D

PS: In case you're wondering about my motives for writing the above, no, I have never been a member of Cymru Goch, have not fallen out with them and have no personal grudge against anyone involved.

Clueless Americans?

Dear Do or Die Collective,

Reading your magazine, through the hands of a friend via the EF! ho-down up in Oregon or wherever it was, was a great blast of interesting and funny and informative writing. Personally speaking, too much of the EF! scene here just pisses me off with it's ignorance, separatism from other struggles, and straight out stupidity. Not to say folks here aren't doing important shit, it's just that they're sometimes a bit clueless as to the rest of the planet, or the rest of their own continent, for that matter.

But I liked your 'zine, because of its intelligence, global vision, and, well, its radical-ness. Oh yeah and sense of humour. I'm afraid that I'd have to agree



with your reviewer about our own stateside journal: it's a bit tame politically, and basically has the same navel-gazing world view of most other gringos, with a cool eco-merchandising section. Without sounding too much like a social scientist, I actually do feel there's a sort of anti-intellectual bent in the US that pervades many facets of society. Sometimes it's a helpful thing, and makes people trust themselves over the 'experts', and try anything, but other times it manifests itself as an active unwillingness, or even *fear* of thoroughly discussing things or figuring out where you're coming from, or going to. That's why I liked *Do or Die*, it contained thoughtful and in depth discussions about the directions the radical environmental movement is taking, covering way more intelligently and thoroughly than most of the similar writing I've seen from this side of the Atlantic.

Also, it seems that you don't even question that the radical green movement is inherently connected, in some way, to the 'red' and 'black' movements, while as here I feel like people still think it's a completely separate thing, which is bullshit as far as I'm concerned. So keep up the good work.

Love,
MP

A Big Fat Feminist Rant About Sex

Dear Do or Die,

Pregnancy is a political issue. So why are loads of otherwise sorted site girls getting inseminated, and why are most of them either very young or from working class backgrounds? Something seems to be up the duff with our capacity to talk about cultural attitudes to sex and it's leaving a lot of women either emotionally scarred by abortion or up to their ears in nappies. That's an impressively dodgy sweeping statement but from what I've observed this year it seems to be true, and unless a debate is started soon the damage can only get worse.

These pregnancies aren't the result of women who have consciously chosen motherhood as what they want most at this point in their lives, they're accidents. They must be genuine accidents because we can't possibily accept that sexism and even straightforward arrogance and ignorance are rife within parts of the movement. That these women may not be confident enough to demand protection. That their bumps might in part be the product of a mindset which finds it easier to rant about society's inhibited attitudes to orgies than the fact that condoms and other contraceptives are sneered at as Babylonian and distasteful.

It's an unfortunate truth that direct action does have a tendency to OD on testosterone, but usually the boring shadow of sexism is just irritating. When it comes to shagging however, patriarchy becomes positively dangerous. Male dominance in the sleeping bag means that condoms are seen to equate with bad/inhibited sex just because they slightly dull the bloke's sensation and thus delay his orgasm. The fact that this is good news for female pleasure seems to have got lost in the prehistoric notion that women 'give themselves' to men in a procedure where male satisfaction is the ultimate goal.

This sort of bollox is given an eco-warrior twist with the whole 'live life to extremes, every risk is worth it, I am an adventurer in the world of sensual excess unburdened by the shackles of latex' type stuff. Apart from the uncomfortable truth that very little sex is worth risking AIDS for, there is also the small matter of another human being. Of course we have the right to screw up ourselves and our bodies with class A's, dodgy walkways and other strange pleasures, but that liberty can't really be extended to messing with the lives of people we create. Not that I'm denying a lot of people make great emergency parents, but isn't the universe a hard enough place to arrive in without being an inconvenient blip in someone's general world saving/happiness achieving schemes?

I don't know what the answer is to all this, cosy contraceptive lectures round the firepit would hardly aid slop digestion, and a communal stash of rubbers from the local family planning only works if people use them. One way or another though we need to be more open about this, before all that yoghurt about 'protecting the Mother' starts tasting a bit sour.

Yours-expecting-lots-of-vociferous-feedback-about-how-it's-'none-of-your-fucking-business-you-preachy-middle-class-twat'
Nanny Cunt of the Durex marketing board

Dilution by Acceptance…

Dear Do or Die,

Issue seven made many good points on the media's relationship with direct action: in particular, the review of *Gathering Force* was valuable in revealing the 'recuperation' tactic of dilution by acceptance. The same tactic also applies to more 'reasonable' campaigns, which have been overwhelmed by government consultation exercises of dubious sincerity. The new regional government structures promise 'a seat at the table,' so should we stop shouting outside?

It's vital to be heard at all levels… but experience from the campaign Bills, public inquiries and Agenda 21 shows a vast democratic deficit. Take the Hastings Bypass Public Inquiry of 1995-6, which in July 1998 said the road should go ahead, with even this decision now subject to yet more bureaucratic, semi-clandestine 'study'.

I've been involved in South Coast Against Roadbuilding (SCAR) which, while not undertaking direct action as such, has been an excellent network for local anti-roads groups. Your Personality Politics article (see *Do or Die* No. 7, page 35) is right to question media coverage, but I have no problem with media stunts as long as that is the clear aim: with Fairmile, this wasn't the case, hence trivialising the issue. SCAR has done a lot of photo-stunts, and fought the Hastings inquiry hard. We even had the 'award-winning' Emma Must (and we never called her that!). But for all our expert witnesses, the system prevailed.

Regional government could be the biggest 'recuperation' ever, with SCAR and other groups forming a network to feed into it. But if the system starts to control them, they lose the cutting edge. The danger lies in respecting the 'shadow' role too literally, rather than allowing grassroots campaigns to find their own agenda (and, if necessary, 'unrespectable' tactics). Taking the SCAR example, we began in order to shadow the DOT's agenda for a Folkestone to Honiton super-bypass…which was the opposite of divide and rule. But regional government is *exactly* that. Roads, airports and development cross many boundaries, and losing the wider view creates a parochial outlook. Pandering to the official line without scepticism, 'reasonable' campaigners can be manipulated no less than the radical activists. It's best to trust your instincts!

Captain Gasmask

Bob Black's Bits...

Dear Do or Die,

Both the merits and limitations of my book *Anarchy after Leftism* are implicit in its first sentence: "This small book is nothing more than a critique of another small book, Murray Bookchin's *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm*." This was all I promised. If I delivered a little more, as your reviewer suggests (and I like to think), so much the better, but a book taking this form is bound to be more critical than constructive. I don't have to have all the right answers to notice that Bookchin has the wrong ones.

In itself, it is not too important that Bookchin now contradicts his earlier writings, and on a large scale.



A bigger man than Bookchin would acknowledge his mistakes and recount what he has learnt from them. After all, he claims to be a dialectician. But Bookchin, like Big Brother, is always right. In *SALA* he savages a motley array of critics and rivals, arraigned as co-defendants, as "lifestyle anarchists", although only he perceives the essential equivalence of their iniquity: to anyone else, all they seem to have in common is Bookchin's hatred. It's not just that these villains disagree with him now, the worst of it is they *agree* with him *back when*. As I wrote in *AAL*: "Some of us believed him then. Now he tells us we were wrong, although he never tells us *he* ever was. Why should we believe him now?"

I dealt with Bookchin as a leftist because in *SALA* (Inshallah?) he cast himself as inheritor and champion of "the left that was"—his phrase—and because his regression from his earlier, higher perspectives invariably consists of regression to the traditional leftism he traduced in "Listen, Marxist!" He seems unaware that his own vaunted creation Social Ecology is now part of The Left That Was and has had little appeal to The Left That Still Is, Sort Of. "Lifestyle anarchists" take Social Ecology a lot more seriously (too seriously, I'd say) than do the class-struggle workerists. For realising what remains vital in the left whilst superseding the rest, Bookchin's tirade is quite useless.

If Bookchin's category of "lifestyle anarchism" is incoherent, his usurpation of "social anarchism"—defined as Bookchinism—as its antithesis is slanderous and scandalous. *Without exception*, Bookchin's designated enemies are anti-capitalist, collectivist anarchists. As far as I'm concerned Bookchin can define Social Ecology as whatever he says it means this week, as he seems to have coined the phrase, but he's not absconding with Social Anarchism.

Finally, a disagreeable point about footnote 6, which most of your readers must have found incom-

prehensible. Among his other adjectival ejaculations, Bookchin denounced lifestyle anarchists as fascistic Nazi sympathisers (while contradictorily accusing the very same people of individualism and liberalism). Meanwhile he celebrated the Great White Fathers of 19th century left anarchism, such as Bakunin. So I quoted a disparaging description of Karl Marx in a letter by Bakunin which included mention of Marx being Jewish, because it was uncannily descriptive of Bookchin too. I was not endorsing Bakunin's private lapse into anti-Semitism, I was showing up Bookchin's double standard.



Enter *Anarchist Integralism* by gay novelist Stewart Home, writing as 'Luther Blissett'. As his books are not selling very well and his Art Strike publicity stunt is ancient history, Home has cast about for other ways to attract attention. In successive pamphlets he has denounced as fascists—first, environmentalists and Greens; next, Green anarchists; and now anarchists generally. In this latest pamphlet, he quotes me, quoting Bakunin to prove that Bakunin was something of an anti-Semite, to prove that I am an anti-Semite. By similar reasoning, when Home quotes somebody to prove he is an anti-Semite (such as Bakunin or myself) that proves that *Home* is an anti-Semite, right? As he may well be, as he has long standing ties to the neo-Nazi band Sol Invictus associated with the National Front.

Sincerely,
Bob Black, PO Box 3142, Albany, NY 12203-0142, USA.

The Third Way

Greetings Do or Die,

In the 1960's USA activists really only explored two alternatives to political power—the ballot or the bullet. Direct action by USA left activists was generally a means to the end of one of those two alternatives. I am still reading Do or Die to understand how the political end is achieved via the direct action strategy. Be good to yourselves! For a better future for us all!

Power to the people!
Mark Cook #027100, Airway Heights Correctional Center, PO Box 1809, Unit LA-5L, Airway Heights, WA 90001-1809, USA.

Liberal Myths

Dear Do or Die,

Activists are welcome to criticise the revolutionary politics of *Green Anarchist* (GA) but the correct place for this is in the pages of *GA*, other movement publications and not in court or inside a prison cell.

Under the liberal myth, people have a supposed 'right' to express themselves freely. With the Gandalf trial, this liberal myth of freedom of thought is shown to be an empty lie. Their whole system is founded on lies. Do you propose to answer this with Reformism?

To campaign for freedom of expression is not to endorse the revolutionary politics of *GA*. As the list of publications in my 'Gandalf Diary' shows, any movement publication is a potential target: *Do or Die*, the Newbury *Road Raging* book publishers, *SchNEWS*, *Earth First! Action Update*. Gandalf is just a laboratory and DSI Thomas merely the vivisector sub-contracted by the state. Is there a reformist answer to this?

Now that we have been done, all they have to do is demonstrate you have 'links' with *GA* and you can be part of the conspiracy too. Ever mentioned *GA* in your zine? Knowledge equals guilt…

It starts with slogans like 'For the destruction of civilisation' and ends disallowing calls ('incitements'!) to save the trees at Stanworth Woods, or the snails at Newbury. Once you allow the Hampshire Stasi in, you might as well just hand over editorial control.

No, the answer is to deny the Reich any 'right' to interfere IN ANY WAY with our publications. You aren't going to get this repudiation through reformist bleating about the supposed 'right' to freedom of expression. That is a lie, it is empty. You won't get Liberty defending you, or any of the dead mainstream press supporting you. You can whittle away at it piecemeal forever with Reformism, but so long as the Reich remains, so does our problem. Alternatively, there is always Revolution. It's your choice…

With best wishes—in a personal capacity,
Steve Booth, Green Anarchist, BM 1715, London, WC1N 3XX, UK.



Still No Escape From Patriarchy

Dear Do or Die,

Well, well, well, Do or Die finally has something to say about women! (No Escape from Patriarchy—*DoD* No.7) I imagine that most of the women (and probably quite a few men) reading this article could identify with a lot of the situations mentioned—and not just in the experience of living on site. For the 6 years that I have been involved in radical ecological direct action I have found that time and time again on actions, in offices, in meetings, in publications, on camps and in bed, sexism in its many forms is rife.

I agree with the writer of this article that "sites are patriarchal, but then so is society, and it is society I blame for it." However, I disagree that this is "a by-product of Western culture." Unfortunately, patriarchy is way more than that.

Patriarchy is the systemic oppression of women by men which has arguably been present in society since at least the dawn of civilisation. (There isn't space here to go into the many theories around how and why patriarchy developed, but if you're interested then go to any bookshop or library and look in the Women's/Feminism section and you'll find plenty of stuff on the subject.) Yes, patriarchy has specific manifestations in late 20th century western culture—like the systematic objectification/sexualisation of women's bodies in popular media, or the fact that women are generally the primary care-givers to children and the elderly (but hooray! in our liberated world they can have a job too!!). However, fundamentally patriarchy is still about just one thing—men's power over women.

The many manifestations of patriarchy at any given time are nothing more than the system's latest ways of enforcing that power. Sometimes this is very, very blatant—in situations like rape and physical abuse against women (in other cultures and historical eras we have seen foot-binding, female infanticide, forced sterilisation or hysterectomy, female genital mutilation, wife-burning, forced prostitution…). However most of the ways in which patriarchy is enforced are much more subtle—the education system which conditions subordination in girls, or the gender stereotypes which capitalism promotes and profits from. (If you want proof of the latter just watch a few hours of TV for a quick run-down on the ways in which women are represented as either domesticated, deferring to men, in caring roles, needing protection from men etc., or as the sexualised 'property' of men (both physically and ideologically.)) The whole thing is very insidious and it has to be. It works on a level of not only accentuating the power men have in society, but also the powerlessness of women. We are meant to internalise our inequality and accept it as the norm, then we become tools for the system, continually reinforcing our own oppression. Yet this only works <u>because</u> of the subtlety of forms which patriarchy takes. Look at how much more resistance and outrage there is to the blatant manifestations of patriarchy—rape, physical abuse etc. compared to the more subtle forms such as how kids are educated and how the entire legal system is inherently sexist.

Looked at in this light it is easier to see why the radical ecological direct action movement is not really tackling the issue of women's oppression, and why the blatant sexism seen on site is unfortunately the very tip of the iceberg. We are very good (as a largely anarchist, increasingly anti-capitalist group of people) at arguing and acting for the removal of the great inequalities of power between classes of people in our society (the possessed and the dispossessed basically). However, we are not so good at looking at the more insidious types of power systems—*especially those in which we have power ourselves*. If we are serious about wanting revolution, then we have to face the fact that this revolution will need to remove the power element in our <u>social</u> relationships—not just our overtly political or economic ones. So those with the power will need to give it up. We aren't just talking here about men giving up their power over women, but also able over disabled, white over black, older over younger…in other words creating a society where no-one has <u>any</u> sort of power over anyone else.

This is a bloody difficult task. We are all conditioned into our roles of power and powerlessness, and the systems of power which dominate our society do not take holidays. It is virtually impossible for us to conceive of a society without power systems because we have never experienced it and there are few, if any, cracks in the system which we can enlarge. (Also I suspect that power has a nasty habit of being rather like a computer virus—even when you think it has gone away another manifestation of it crops up elsewhere!)

This all leads me to agree with the writer of 'No Escape from Patriarchy' when she says that "being aware, and not assuming that women are incompetent is a major step forward." But "being aware" is not a Saturday job. "Being aware" for all people must mean continually attempting to remove the

power relationships that exist between groups and individuals in society. We've all got to learn to give up our power and our powerlessness, and to assist others to do the same, whether that means pointing out the power dynamics of our social relations or challenging overtly sexist/racist/ etc. acts. Above all we should recognise that this is not a 'diversion' from the revolutionary process of which we are a part, but rather the very heart of it.

Yours,

Sylvia Pankhurst's Maid

Slack Blag Writes…

Dear Do or Die,

I greatly enjoyed No. 7 which was full of inspirational stuff, particularly the Sem Terra article. I have to say I find some of your analyses a bit contradictory, but that's a much longer letter than you'd have space for. I just wanted to raise a point about the article on the No Opencast actions, where the author said that as a radical ecologist they didn't want to see any docks at all, as they are part of an insane system of mass production. Well, yes and no—ancient cultures all had ports despite very limited production. Without them, the implication is that no one would ever leave or come into this island.

In any anarchist society, a great proportion of long distance journeys made would be unnecessary, but not all. For example, a woman I work with had to fly to Jamaica to be with her dying father a few years ago—who is to tell her she can't? I realize it's probably a day or so's walk in similar circumstances if your family is from Cheshire or Sussex, but one in three people where I live are not white. Perhaps the 'radical ecological society' your writer envisages will also do away with migration, but somehow I doubt it will happen like that. I'm sure they didn't mean to put things this way, but the position of no ports/airports, and by extension immigrants, is one that would normally find favour with the sort of people your contributors would not normally agree with.

Yours,

M, c/o Black Flag, BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX, UK.

Albert Dryden

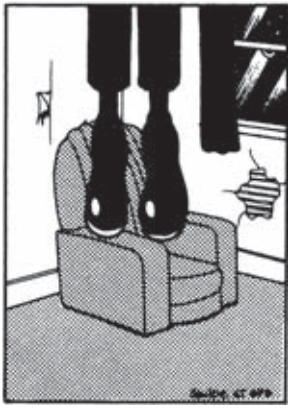
Dear DoD,

As someone that has been imprisoned for political activities, I strongly agree that prisoner support is one of the most important aspects of political activity. However, unlike the other people listed in Prisoners (*Do or Die* No. 7, page 136) Albert Dryden does not fit into the *Do or Die* statement "those imprisoned for their involvement in ecological, anti-nuclear/military, animal liberation, anti-fascist/racist, anti-State and indigenous peoples struggles."

The person he killed (who is) referred to as a council official was involved in many campaigns for a better world, both ecological and for people. Harry was a gentle friend who did not deserve to be killed. He was a friend of mine, killed 7 years ago. There was no justification for his killing and I would imagine someone's been misled into putting his killer down as deserving support from activists. Maybe you could let people know about this.

Thanks,

JR



Irish Wind

Dear Do or Die,

You may be getting some news from us in the future as this place is a vegan anarchist commune perched halfway up a mountain. And a great way to be until someone decided to propose here as a place to put the biggest wind farm in Europe so far! I'm into windpower but not on that scale. We're 250 acres and a mile from the house that will be dug up and concreted with roads all over it. It's crucial habitat for rare birds of prey, bats, otters etc. so we ain't going to let it happen. We've teamed up with Cobh anti-pylons groups in County Cork who I've actively supported since it started a year ago. They at present may be evicted from tree houses at any time.

Anyhow it's important EF!ers get to know about the wind power issue and how it's not 'green' in any way. Don't believe the bullshit—the power is for plastics/agro-chemical factories etc.. It will not save coal or peat being burned. This is because they demand more power. Windmills (the big ones) kill birds and the power fields fuck up all life.

Good luck—and keep up the pressure,

V

If you want to contact the author of this letter send your correspondence to DoD and we'll pass it on.

UK Earth First! Network Groups

Bath EF!
c/o PO Box 426
Bath
Somerset BA1 2ZD
01249 713742

Bristol EF!
c/o Box 51
Greenleaf Bookshop
82 Colston Street
Bristol BS1 5BB
0117 939 3093

Cambridge EF!
Box E, 12 Mill Road
Cambridge CB1 2AD

Cardiff EF!
c/o Green Group
Glamorgan University SU
Pontyridd
Mid-Glamorgan CF37 1DL

Cheltenham EF!
16 Portland Street
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL52 2PB
hq@cheltef.freeserve.co.uk

Exeter Environmental Network
PO Box 185
Exeter EX4 4EW

Fife EF!
c/o 91 South Street
St Andrews
Fife KY16 9Q

Glasgow EF!
PO Box 180
Glasgow G4 9AB

Gwynedd and Mon EF!
The Greenhouse
1 Trevelyan Terrace
Bangor LL57 1AX
01248 355821
afu01b@bangor.ac.uk

Hull on Earth
c/o PO Box 43
Hull HU1 1AA

LEAF
Box Z, 13 Biddulph Street
Leicester LE2 1BH
0116 270 9616

Leeds EF!
c/o 16 Sholebroke Avenue
Chapeltown
Leeds LS7 3HB
0113 262 9365
cornerstone@gn.apc.org

Liverpool EF!
96 Bold Street
Liverpool L1 4HY

London Greenpeace
5 Caledonian Road
London N1 9DX
0171 713 1269
info@mcspotlight.org

Manchester EF!
Dept 29
255 Wilmslow Road
Manchester M14 5LW
0161 226 6814
mancef@nematode.freeserve.co.uk

Mid-Somerset EF!
PO Box 23
5 High Street
Glastonbury
Somerset BA6 9PU

Norfolk EF!
c/o The Greenhouse
42-46 Bethel Street
Norwich NR2 1NR

Nottingham EF!
c/o 182 Mansfield Road
Nottingham NG1 3HW
0115 958 5666

Oldham EF!
PO Box 127
Oldham OL4 3FE

Oxford Community Action
Box E, 111 Magdalen Road
Oxford OX4 1RQ

Reading Roadbusters
RIS Centre
35-39 London Street
Reading
Berkshire RG1 4PS
0118 954 6430
roadbusters@clara.net

Reclaim The Streets
PO Box 9656
London N4 4JY
0171 281 4621
rts@gn.apc.org

Reclaim The Valleys
c/o Swansea Environmental Centre
Pier Street
Swansea SA1 1RY

Sheffield EF!
RECYC
54 Upperthorpe Road
Sheffield S6 3EB

Southampton EF!
SUSU Pigeonholes
Southampton University
University Road
Southampton SO14
eco@soton.ac.uk

South Devon EF!
Birdwood House
44 High Street
Totnes
Devon TQ9 5SQ

South Downs EF!
c/o 6 Tilbury Place
Brighton
East Sussex BN2 2GY

Swansea People EF!
c/o Green Action
Swansea University SU
Swansea
Wales

Tyneside Action for People and Planet (TAPP)
PO Box 1TA
Newcastle NE1 1TA
tapp@newcastle54.freeserve.co.uk

Woodland Awareness and Defence (WAND)
7 Pitcox
Dunbar
East Lothian EH42 1RQ

Warwick EF!
c/o Green Society
Warwick University SU
Coventry CV4 7AL
suuad@csv.warwick.ac.uk

Wolves Eco-Action
c/o Wolves Hunt Sabs
Wolverhampton Uni SU
Wulfruna Street
Wolverhampton WV1 1LY

York EF!
c/o York LEAF
PO Box 323
York



Other UK Groups/Networks/Contacts

Anarchist Communist Federation
c/o 84b Whitechapel High Street
London E1 7QX

Advisory Service for Squatters
2 St Pauls Road
London N1 2QN
0171 359 8814
advice@squat.freeserve.co.uk

Anarchist Teapot Action Kitchen
Box B
Public House Bookshop
21 Little Preston Street
Brighton BN1 2HQ

Anarcho-Primitivist Network
PO Box 252
Rickmansworth
Hertfordshire WD3 3AY

Anti Fascist Action
BM 1734
London
WC1N 3XX

Campaign Against The Arms Trade
11 Goodwin Street
London N4 3HQ
0171 281 0297
campaign@cat.demon.co.uk

Blatant Incitement Collective
c/o Dept 29
255 Wilmslow Road
Manchester M14 5LW
0161 226 6814
mancef@nematode.freeserve.co.uk

Disabled Action Network
3 Crawley Street
Wood Green
London N22 6AN
0181 889 1361

Forest Action Network
The Greenhouse
42-46 Bethel Street
Norwich
NR2 1NR

Genetic Engineering Network
c/o PO Box 9656
London N4 4JY
0181 374 9516
genetics@gn.apc.org

Green Anarchist Network
BM 1715
London WC1N 3XX

Haringey Solidarity Group
PO Box 2474
London N8 OHW
0181 374 5027
hsy@clara.net

Hunt Saboteurs Association
PO Box 2786
Brighton
BN2 2AX
01273 622827
hsa@gn.apc.org

Industrial Workers of the World
75 Humberstone Gate
Leicester
LE1 1WB

The Land is Ours
Box E
111 Magdalen Road
Oxford OX4 1RQ
01865 722016
office@tlio.demon.co.uk

Making Waves
PO Box 1377
Sheffield S36 4BZ
01226 764279
pp3mo@aol.com

No Opencast
190 Shepherds Bush Road
London W6 7NL
0171 603 1831

Solidarity Federation
PO Box 29
SWPO
Manchester
M15 5HW
0161 231 8177

Third Battle Of Newbury
PO Box 5642
Newbury
Berkshire RG14 8WG
0700 785201
thirdbattle@hotmail.com

URGENT
Box HN
111 Magdalen Road
Oxford OX4 1RQ
01865 721366
info@urgent.org.uk

More Contacts

For UK protest/direct action camp contacts see page 148. For squatted spaces/infoshops/social centres see page 130 and for prisoner support groups see page 290.
For details of over 500 contacts from all over the world--as well as re-prints of issues 151 to 200 and loads of extra information--see *The SchNEWS Survival Handbook* (ISBN 0-952-97482-7). Order your copy for a cheap £7.20 (including postage) from: SchNEWS, c/o PO Box 2600, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 2DX, UK.

International Ecological Direct Action Groups

An Talamh Glas
4 Ashgrove, Seacrest
Knocknacarra
Ireland
roberta@indigo.ie

ASEED Europe
PO Box 92066
1090 AB Amsterdam
Netherlands
31-20 6682236
aseedeur@antenna.nl

Autonomous Green Action
POB 4721, Station E
Ottawa
Ontario K1S 5H9
Canada
soy@igs.net

Action For Social Ecology
Box 34089
10026 Stockholm
Sweden
ekologisten@usa.net

Coast Mountains EF!
1472 Commercial Drive
Box 128
Vancouver V5L 3X9
Canada
1 604 708 9660

Czech Republic EF!
Zeme predevsim!
PO Box 237
16041 Prague 6
Czech Republic
zemepredevsim@ecn.cz

Earth Action!
POB 181034
Dalbridge
Durban 6016
South Africa

Ecodefence!
Moskovsky Prospekt
120–34236006
Kaliningrad/Koenigsburg
Russia
ecodefence@glas.apc.org

FZLN
Calle Zapotecos 7 Bis
Colonia Obreras
Del Cuauhtemoc
Mexico
525 7614236

Green Action Israel
PO Box 4611
Tel-Aviv 61046
Israel
972 (0) 3 516 2349

Green Korea Unlimited
IOF Garden Tower Building
98-78 Wooni-dong
Chongo-gu

Seoul 110-350
South Korea

Groene Front!
Postbus 85069
3058
AB Utrecht
Netherlands
groenfr@dds.nl

Movimento Sem Terra (MST)
Alameda Barao De Limeira
1232-01202-002
Sao Paulo, Brazil
011 3361 3866
semterra@mst.org.br

Poland EF!
PO Box 40
43-304 Bielsko-Biala 4
Poland
48-33 183153
wapienica@pnrwi.most.org.pl

Rainbow Keepers
POB 14
Nizhni Novgorod
603082, Russia
8312 34 32 80

Rainbow Keepers (Ukraine)
PO Box 322
Kiev 252187
Ukraine
7 38 044 2657628
rk@cci.glasnet.ru

Slobodona alternativa
Staromestska 6/D
811 03 Bratislava
Slovakia

Volunteers For Earth Defence
189 San Antonio Ext SFDM
1105 Quezon City
Philippines

Yet More Contacts

For a more complete listing of radical ecological and revolutionary groups and organisations from across the globe check out the contacts in the back of the USA published *Earth First! Journal* (see below for contact details) or visit the web sites at:
www.snet.co.uk/ef
www.j18.org

Journals/Magazines

Anarchy
A Journal of Desire Armed
CAL Press
POB 1446 Columbia
MO 65205-1446
USA.
jmcquinn@mail.coin.missouri.edu
Neither left nor right—just an uncompromisingly anti-authoritarian, pro-anarchy, ideology-smashing magazine.

Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group
BM 1160
London WC1N 3XX
UK
Updates on prisoners, news, articles and reports of actions to free animals impriosned for scientifc research, food or fur.

Arkangel
BCM 9240
London WC1N 3XX
UK.
Well produced animal liberation magazine with a large section of local and national contacts as well as longer articles and news reports.

Aufheben
PO Box 2536
Rottingdean
East Sussex
BN2 6LX
UK
A theoretical magazine published by our very favourite autonomist marxists.

Black Clad Messenger
POB 1131
Eugene
OR 97402
USA
Rants, essays and scathing anti-reformist commentary from a radical eco/primitivist slant.

Corporate Watch
c/o Box E
111 Magdalen Road
Oxford
OX4 1RQ
UK
Researches into, and dishes the dirt on, corporations. A bit liberal and incoherent though.

Black Flag
BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX
UK
blakflag@dircon.co.uk
Irregular but established anarchist magazine with some good articles and worldwide news.

Direct Action
PO Box 1095
Sheffield
S2 4YR
UK
0161 232 7889
ManchesterSF@scandrac.demon.co.uk
High octane, adrenalin packed publication of the anarcho-syndicalist Solidarity Federation.

Earth First! Journal
POB 1415
Eugene OR 97440
USA
541 344 8004
earthfirst@igc.org
Cool arse-kicking newspaper of EF! over the water. Has news, analysis and letters on all types of global eco-resistance.

The Ecologist
Unit 18 Chelsea Wharf
15 Lots Road
London SW10 0GY
UK
0171 351 3578
ecologist@gn.apc.org
Getting better all the time this is the 'established and mainstream' ecology magazine. Excellent research, articles and global news.

Feral
530 Divisadaro
Suite 321
San Francisco
CA 94117
USA
highwater@hotmail.com
Good new radical ecological/anarchist journal dedicated to the expansion of biocentric and anarchist theory and practice.

Fifth Estate
4632 Second Avenue
Detroit
Michigan 48201
USA
Excellent long running anti-civilisation newspaper.

Green Anarchist
BM 1715
London
WC1N 3XX
UK
Newspaper boldly sub-titled 'For the destruction of civilisation'. What more can we say?

Howl
PO Box 2786
Brighton
East Sussex BN2 AX
UK
Glossy and news focused magazine of the Hunt Saboteurs Association.

Live Wild or Die!
POB 204

2425-B Channing Way
Berkley CA 94704
USA
Occasional, wild rampaging newspaper from some friendly revolutionary eco-freaks.

Morgenmuffel
c/o 21 Little Preston Street
Brighton
East Sussex BN1 2HQ
UK
Cool cartoon and rant zine produced by a talented and beautiful woman.

Organise!
84b Whitechapel High Street
London
E1 7QX
UK
Magazine of the Anarchist Communist Federation.

Peace News
5 Caledonian Road
London
N1 9D
UK
Quarterly 'revolutionary pacifist' magazine with some good news coverage.

Revolt!
POB 25706
Eugene
OR 97402
USA
Excellent anarcho-primitivist zine from that Stateside hotbed of radicalism.

Smash Hits
BM Box 5538
London WC1N 3XX
UK
A forum for discussion on all aspects of revolutionary theory and practice.

Treeflesh
POB 869
Searsport
MA 04974
USA
Social and eco-revolutionary fanzine.

Venomous Butterfly
41 Sutter Street
Suite 1661
San Francisco
CA 94104, USA
A publishing project aimed at producing insurrectionary anarchist writings.

Newletters/Bulletins

Counter Information
c/o Transmission
28 King Street
Glasgow G1 5QP
Scotland
Long running anarcho type newsletter. Carries news from all over the world.

Earth First! Action Update
c/o 16 Sholebroke Avenue
Chapeltown
Leeds LS7 3HB
UK
0113 262 9365
actionupdate@gn.apc.org
Published by a loud mouthed bunch of eco-revolutionaries this is a monthly 8 page newsletter that covers ecological direct action in the UK.

Genetics Update
PO Box 9656
London N4 4JY, UK
0181 374 9516
info@genetix.freeserve.co.uk
Monthly newletter of the Genetic Engineering Network (GEN) with news/events of action against biotechnology.

Haringey Community Action
PO Box 2474
London N8 0HW, UK
Amazing community based and direct action-ish newsletter with 12,000 copies produced every few months.

The Land is Ours
Box E, 111 Magdalen Road
Oxford OX4 1RQ
UK
Newsletter of the UK landrights campaign.

Ned Ludds News
c/o Rainbow Centre
180 Mansfield Road
Nottingham NG1 3HW
Cool FIN covering direct action locally and nationally.

Oxyacetylene
c/o Box G
111 Magdalen Road
Oxford OX4 1RQ
UK
An Oxford newsletter covering the gamut of action, from direct to not-so-direct. Warning—has *very* crap coverage of some things (June 18th for example).

The Porkbolter
PO Box 4144
Worthing
West Sussex BN14 7NZ
UK
Local direct action/dirt dishing newsletter with the coolest name.

Schnews
PO Box 2600
Brighton
East Sussex BN2 2DX
UK
Weekly direct action newsletter from some of the Brighton rent-a-mob. Full of global news and forthcoming events.

The Sheffield Digger
c/o 54 Upperthorpe Road
Upperthorpe
Sheffield S6
UK
A free newsletter to network the news they won't let you hear and help connect together the people of Sheffield.

Spirit of Freedom
c/o 16 Sholebroke Avenue
Chapeltown
Leeds LS7 3HB
UK
earthlib@hotmail.com
Occasional, but very good, eco-prisoner (and others) support newsletter.



Think Globally Act Locally
c/o Box 1TA
Newcastle NE1 1TA
UK
Local newsletter covering direct action and other stuff in the North East.

Uprising!
c/o PAN
167 Fawcett Road
Southsea
Hants PO4 0DH
Well produced newsletter of the Portsmouth Anarchist Network.

West Country Activist
c/o PO Box 478
Taunton TA2 7YR
UK
wca@conk.com

Train Yer Brain with your Do or Die Logic Problem!

The construction of a superpub had seen massive opposition in the sleepy town of Alesville. Now that the work has started, 5 concerned residents went out individually every night and trashed the site. From the clues given below by a police informer, can you help with the investigation and find out who trashed what on which night, and how much damage they caused?

① Old Mrs Little came home late Tuesday night.

② Sheila (the town's punkrocker) boasted about causing £1600 worth of damage, but not to fences.

③ The digger was trashed on Monday night.

④ £1700 worth of damage was caused Friday night but not by Crusty the Clown.

⑤ Fat Bob caused £200 more damage to the cement mixer than the damage caused the night before (not Tuesday or Thursday)

⑥ Less damage was caused on Thursday than to the dumptruck.

	Mrs Little	Sheila	Bob	Crusty	The Vicar	Digger	Cement mixer	Fences	Portacabin	Dumptruck	£1500	£1600	£1700	£1800	£1900
Monday															
Tuesday															
Wednesday															
Thursday															
Friday															
£1500															
£1600															
£1700															
£1800															
£1900															
Digger															
Cement mixer															
Fences															
Portacabin															
Dumptruck															





(use the grid to keep track of all definite NO's and YES's. remember to transfer new info from one part of the chart to other relevant parts)

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